



SUPER BOWL LII
Former Giants QB
established blueprint
for fellow backup Foles
Back page

WAR/MILITARY
DOD: Gag order
on Afghanistan
data was a mistake
Page 6

MILITARY
Security concerns
prompt review of
fitness device policies
Page 2

Russian jet comes within 5 feet of Navy plane over Black Sea » Page 3

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50¢/Free to Deployed Areas

Ruthless rivalry

Stepped-up violence
in Afghanistan
alternately claimed
by ISIS, Taliban

Page 7

RAHMAT GUL/AP

Glass from a shattered window of a photography shop is scattered near the site of Saturday's deadly suicide attack that was claimed by the Taliban in Kabul, Afghanistan. Islamic State and the Taliban are competing to take credit for a horrific spike in violence in Afghanistan in the past month.

Survey says hundreds of DOD properties vulnerable to climate-related damage

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

More than half of 3,500 Defense Department properties experienced climate-related damage in 2014-15, according to a

DOD survey sent to Congress on Friday.

This first-ever comprehensive site survey of climate vulnerabilities focused on the negative effects that severe weather—including storm-surge flooding, extreme temperatures, wind and drought—had on

those properties.

Prepared by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, the survey, which includes events beginning in September 2014, found that drought had the broad-

est impact, with 782 properties reporting damage.

Closely following were 763 sites with wind damage and 706 sites reporting flooding that was unrelated to storm surge.

SEE CLIMATE ON PAGE 6

MILITARY

Pentagon reviews fitness device policies over security concerns

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Pentagon officials could adjust policies governing the use of wearable electronics, such as fitness tracking wristbands, after an interactive map was published online that could reveal sensitive information about servicemembers in war zones, a Defense Department spokesman said Monday.

The Pentagon is reviewing the use of wireless technology, including fitness bands such as Fitbits and smartphones, in an effort to ensure servicemembers are not endangered by information collected by gadgets that could be made public, said Army Col. Rob Manning, a Pentagon spokesman. The review follows the publishing of a global heat map over the weekend by GPS tracking company Strava. The map shows

regular routes used by some 27 million people around the world, according to the company.

In unpopulated areas — such as in areas American troops operate in Syria and Afghanistan — Strava's map appears to show the outlines of known U.S. military posts and reveals routes American troops use to exercise on the posts or move between bases.

Manning said Monday that he was unaware of the data revealing any sensitive or classified information. He said the Pentagon had not asked Strava to remove any of the data it published.

Manning also said he was unaware of any security breaches occurring in recent days that could be attributed to the published information. He said the Pentagon was not considering the data an immediate force protection issue.

He could not immediately say

how long a review of policies might take.

"The rapid development of technology requires constant refinement of policies and procedures to enhance force protection and operational security," Manning said. "[Defense Department] personnel are advised to emplace strict privacy settings on wireless technologies and applications."

The exact policies governing the use of wearable fitness trackers by uniformed servicemembers vary slightly from service to service. The Navy, for example, has allowed their use since at least 2015, but the service's policy specifies they are authorized only if their GPS systems are "receive-only," meaning they do not transmit their GPS information.

Manning said such wireless devices are also prohibited at certain Defense Department sites, at likely sensitive locations and



MARK LENIHAN/AP

The Pentagon is conducting a broad review of how military forces use exercise trackers, such as the Fitbit Alta HR, in the wake of revelations that an interactive online map can pinpoint troop locations, bases and other sensitive areas around the world.

during "specific activities," but he declined to elaborate.

The Washington Post on Monday reported experts and internet users had discovered Strava's data could be used to identify specific users by name. The newspaper reported a user had used the heat map and Google to identify an Army major who frequented a running route on a base in Afghanistan.

Strava said in a statement that

the company is committed to helping users better use privacy settings and said they "are committed to working with military and government officials to address sensitive areas that might appear" on their map.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis was aware of the issue, Manning said, adding the Pentagon is taking the matter seriously.

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Army warns troops about potentially dangerous vaping oils

By DREW BROOKS
The Fayetteville (N.C.) Observer

The U.S. Army Public Health Center has issued a warning to users of e-cigarettes and other vaping products after approximately 60 troops in North Carolina experienced serious medical issues.

A public health alert was issued by the center Monday. According to officials, soldiers from Fort Bragg and Marines from Camp Lejeune have reported adverse

health effects believed to be caused by vaping products that are marketed as containing cannabidiol, or CBD, oil.

Womack Army Medical Center on Fort Bragg and the Naval Medical Center at Camp Lejeune have treated dozens of troops, according to the alert. Officials did not specify numbers for each hospital, nor did they release the time span during which the troops were treated.

The service members reported headaches, nausea, vomiting, palpitations,

dilated pupils, dizziness, disorientation, agitation and seizures, officials said. Those are all symptoms associated with synthetic cannabinoids.

"Complications from the seizures may have resulted in significant neurologic damage in one soldier and falls/accidents resulting from seizures are blamed for the deaths of two Marines," officials said.

The Army Public Health Center, which is based at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, said four additional public cases

have been reported in North Carolina and 33 cases have been reported in Utah.

They attribute the adverse health effects to man-made chemicals that are meant to replicate those found in marijuana. Army regulations prohibit soldiers from using such products.

The alert cautioned troops to make sure that vaping products they purchase do not contain CBD oil, THC or synthetic cannabinoids.

TODAY IN STRIPES

American Roundup 16
Business 18
Classified 19, 23
Comics 22
Crossword 22
Faces 17
Opinion 20-21
Sports 25-32
Weather 18

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MILITARY

Russian jet comes within 5 feet of Navy plane

In latest Black Sea intercept, fighter crosses directly into flight path of US surveillance aircraft

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A Russian fighter jet flew within 5 feet of a U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane over the Black Sea on Monday, marking another close encounter that American military officials contend increases the risk of midair collisions.

A Russian SU-27 crossed directly into the flight path of a Navy EP-3 and forced the U.S. aircraft to fly through a wake of turbulence behind the Russian fighter, according to U.S. Naval

Forces Europe.

"The duration of the intercept lasted two hours and 40 minutes," said Capt. Pamela Kunze, NAVEUR spokeswoman. "Unsafe actions increase the risk of miscalculation and midair collisions."

Such encounters have been an ongoing concern for the U.S. military, which has faced a series of provocative intercepts by Russian aircraft in the past few years.

In November, a Russian fighter crossed within 50 feet of a U.S. surveillance aircraft flying over the Black Sea, blasting its after-

burners and forcing the American aircraft into a stream of turbulence that caused the plane to tilt into a 15-degree roll.

Navy surveillance aircraft routinely fly out of an air station in Sigonella, Sicily. Many of the aircraft are specialized in anti-submarine warfare and electronic support measures.

Russian submarine activity in the Black and Mediterranean seas has intensified in recent years, according to the U.S. military.

Still, Russian and NATO military aircraft routinely interact during routine intercepts around

the Baltic states and the Black Sea. In most cases, they happen without incident as aircraft follow a set of air safety protocols.

"The Russian military is within its right to operate within international airspace, but they must behave within international standards set to ensure safety and prevent incidents," Kunze said.

U.S. and NATO officials have complained the Russians engage in unpredictable maneuvers that include flying without transponders turned on.

In June, a Russian fighter flew toward a U.S. Air Force surveil-

lance plane over the Baltic Sea with a "high rate of closure speed and poor control of the aircraft," U.S. European Command said at the time. Last year, a Russian fighter barrel-rolled over the top of an Air Force RC-135 flying in Black Sea airspace, a maneuver that the military said put the U.S. crew at risk.

The Navy said its aircraft was operating in international airspace and in accordance with international law when Monday's intercept occurred.

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Army secretary lays out priorities on tour of Europe

By DAN STOUTAMIRE
Stars and Stripes

WIESBADEN, Germany — The Army should learn how to use old-school methods against advanced adversaries in the cyberwarfare age, the Army secretary said Monday.

With technology changing the face of conflict — just this week, a popular fitness app was reported to display the location of sensitive U.S. bases worldwide — Secretary of the Army Mark Esper said he'd like to see soldier training that reflects that reality.

"I'd like to be able to see them operate in a situation where we shut down the net and they have to operate free of radios," Esper said in an interview with Stars and Stripes on Monday. "There's all these things in the future environment that we have to prepare for."

The training Esper envisions would place soldiers in scenarios where they could be easily detected via their heat signatures, or easily exposed to cyberattacks, Esper said.

His emphasis on near-peer adversaries — as opposed to the more recent insurgency-focused conflicts — is in line with the 2018 National Defense Strategy released this month by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, which makes threats posed by Russia and China a priority.

The U.S. has previously accused both Moscow and Beijing of cyberintrusions into government and private systems. The intrusions have raised concerns that GPS and other systems could be compromised in a conflict.

Esper discussed his priorities while on a visit to U.S. European

'There's all these things in the future environment that we have to prepare for.'

Mark Esper
secretary of the Army

Command, U.S. Army Europe and the Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, as well as to U.S. troops in Poland.

"I came in with my top priority being readiness, and we have things we need to do to make sure we're prepared for a high-end fight anywhere in the world," Esper said.

That means "filling our personnel ranks, making sure we have sufficient munitions, making sure our equipment is ready and making sure we're doing the right type of training," Esper said.

The secretary also said that he'd like to see "incremental builds" on the next generation of combat vehicles so they can be outfitted with future technology such as microwave weapons without the need for extensive overhauls.

"We can't wait forever for them to develop, but ... we may want to make sure we leave room on the platforms or power in the system so we can add those on over time," he said.

Esper voiced support for the



DAN STOUTAMIRE/Stars and Stripes

Secretary of the Army Mark Esper said during a meeting with the press Monday in Wiesbaden, Germany, that the Army needs to prepare for "high-end" conflict against near-peer adversaries.

rotation of armored and aviation brigades in Europe, a measure adopted in response to a more aggressive Russia, and said it would remain in place in the near future.

But he isn't ready to shut down the idea of adding more permanent units to the Continent.

"We've got to continue to assess the situation, permanent versus rotating forces, and it may not be a clear black or white," he said. "I keep an open mind about that."

Esper, a businessman who was sworn in on Nov. 20, has already had to deal with political turmoil in Washington. A short-lived

government shutdown affected training for tens of thousands of National Guard and Reserve soldiers.

With another possible shutdown looming in February, Esper said, he and his fellow civilian leaders are working to mitigate further disruptions.

"Myself and certainly Secretary of Defense Mattis will continue to message the Hill and Congress about the criticality of this funding and the urgency given the impacts it has on readiness," he said.

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Investigation of Stuttgart weapons theft is continuing

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The search continues for information on a small-arms weapons heist from a base here in 2016, military officials said.

Several semi-automatic pistols, one small-caliber automatic rifle and a shotgun were among the items taken in July 2016 from a weapons area at the U.S. Army's Panzer Kaserne in Boeblingen, a Stuttgart suburb.

In a sign that investigators could be struggling for leads, the military last year increased the reward from \$10,000 to \$25,000 for information that leads to a successful prosecution.

"The case remains open and ongoing," Christopher Grey, a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command spokesman, said Friday.

The Army hasn't listed all of the items stolen or identified the unit targeted or the post where the theft occurred, citing the active investigation. However, at the time of the incident a military official told Stars and Stripes that the theft occurred at Panzer, which also is home to elite units like Army Green Berets and Navy SEALs, as well as the garrison's headquarters.

The Army hasn't said whether the burglary appears to be an inside job by military personnel or whether an outsider breached the base. Investigators are also mum on whether reward flyers posted around the Stuttgart military community have generated leads.

As a matter of policy, we do not discuss tips that we receive when investigating a felony crime," Grey said.

Anyone with information regarding this case is encouraged to contact Criminal Investigation Command headquarters in Virginia at 844-276-9243, or the local military police at DSN 314-430-5262.

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PACIFIC

Aging Futenma barracks to get \$14M renovation

By TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy is spending \$14 million to renovate an Okinawa barracks that is below fire and safety codes.

The work will upgrade the 35-year-old, four-story quarters for single, enlisted servicemembers at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Naval Facilities Engineering Command said in a statement. The contract was awarded to Nippo Corp.

"This whole building renovation effort will provide our Marines with an updated, comfortable and safe facility," Lt. Cmdr. Luke Cowley, facilities engineering and acquisition division director at Camp Butler, said in the statement.

The work includes remodeling the building to include an exercise area, kitchenette, entertainment room and study room.

A 2014 Inspector General report found multiple health and safety issues at Futenma housing units, including "hazardous electrical

power service drops and broken light fixtures in shower areas" and "significant mold growth in living quarters due to inadequate mitigation of condensation and moisture intrusion." The report said one building had "significant structural damage which presented a danger to building occupants of falling concrete debris and possible structural collapse."

A photo in the report showed the concrete on the underside of a walkway beginning to separate.

Navy officials could not confirm



Courtesy of DOD OIG

This undated image from the Department of Defense Inspector General's 2014 Military Housing Inspections report shows a walkway at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Okinawa.

whether the building being renovated is the one referenced in the IG report. The Futenma barracks will be brought up to standard by summer 2019, said Navy spokesman James Johnson.

"Marines will have an updated,

comfortable and safe facility, fully compliant with anti-terrorism force protection, fire suppression, accessibility, heating and airflow, energy, and environmental code requirements," he said.

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DEANA HEITZMAN/Courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

The first operational Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-35A stealth fighter arrived Friday at Misawa Air Base, Japan.

Japan welcomes first F-35A

By LEON COOK
Stars and Stripes

U.S. and Japanese airmen have welcomed the first operational Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-35A Lightning II to Misawa Air Base in northern Honshu.

The new state-of-the-art stealth fighters touched down Friday at the home of the Air Force's 35th Fighter Wing. Nine more F-35As will soon join it to form Japan's inaugural fifth-generation fighter squadron at Misawa, an Air Force statement said.

"The F-35A will bring transformation in air defense power and significantly contribute to the

peace for citizens and ensure security," Maj. Gen. Kenichi Samejima, commander of Japan's 3rd Air Wing, said in the statement.

Servicemembers will do their best to secure flight safety and establish an operational squadron quickly, he said.

Japan is one of a dozen countries to purchase the F-35A, which is marketed as a multirole aircraft with advanced electronics designed to maximize situational awareness.

"This aircraft represents not only a big step forward in technological advancements and combat capabilities but also in U.S.-Japan relations," said 35th Fighter Wing commander Col. Scott Jobe.

Last September, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121 at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni showed off its F-35Bs to members of the 3rd Air Wing. The B variant is a short-takeoff, vertical-landing aircraft meant to replace the Marines Corps' F/A-18 Hornet, AV-8B Harrier and EA-6B Prowler.

The F-35A takes off and lands like a traditional fighter jet but has the same airframe and other characteristics as the Marines' model.

Japan plans to buy 42 F-35As to replace its fleet of 60-year-old F-4 Phantom II fighters.

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Japanese politician replaced after outburst

By MATTHEW M. BURKE and HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Japanese senior vice minister has been replaced after heckling a Diet member who was critical of recent U.S. military aviation incidents on Okinawa.

Ryosei Tanaka was appointed Monday to replace Fumiaki Matsumoto, who resigned last week.

Matsumoto — a member of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Liberal Democratic Party — shouted "How many people died?" while Japan Communist Party leader Kazuo Shii criticized recent emergency landings by Marine Corps helicopters during a meeting of the House of Representatives on Thursday. Matsumoto's outburst drew a swift rebuke from opposition lawmakers who said it downplayed the incidents.

In accepting Matsumoto's resignation, Abe said Matsumoto apologized for upsetting Okinawans concerned

about the safety of U.S. military aircraft. Abe said it is the government's policy to consider the feelings of Okinawan citizens while doing its best to minimize the burden of hosting military bases on the island prefecture.

There have been three emergency landings by Marine helicopters this month. On Dec. 13, a CH-53E Super Stallion's window fell on an elementary school sports field, slightly injuring a child. There were also significant mishaps involving Okinawa-based aircraft in October and August.

Abe's comments came the same day a Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-15 from Naha Air Base made an emergency landing at Kadena Air Base, a JASDF spokesman said. The fighter was conducting regular training at 1:53 p.m. when a hydraulic system warning came on. No injuries or damage were reported.

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By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The Indiana National Guard will provide the lead brigade for the second leg of this year's Pacific Pathways exercises, marking the first time the Guard has assumed that role in the five years since the initiative began.

The Indiana National Guard's 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team will rotate troops for Pathways as part of the Guardsmen's regular two-week annual training, said Col. Christopher Garver, a spokesman for U.S. Army Pacific, which coordinates Pacific Pathways.

"We're excited because it's a new thing for Pacific Pathways to have a National Guard brigade as the lead of the Pathways element," he said.

Pacific Pathways was launched in 2014 as the brainchild of former USARPAC head Gen. Vincent Paul. It strings together a series of already established joint exercises with allies and partner nations throughout the Pacific.

Instead of troops and equipment being deployed for a single exercise and then returning to a home station, Pathways creates expeditionary-style deployments of units to three months for soldiers and equipment. Among its goals is sustaining a greater Army presence throughout the Pacific.

The lead brigade has usually come from Hawaii or Alaska.

Pathways is generally structured in three separate sets of deployments each year.

The first iteration this year kicks off early next month with Cobra Gold in Thailand, led by the Hawaii-based 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. The soldiers then head to South Korea for training, followed by the Balkan exercise in the Philippines, Garver said.

In the second iteration — roughly July to September — troops from the 76th will first head to Australia for the large Army exercise Hamel. Guardsmen will also

participate in Keris Strike in Malaysia, Garuda Shield in Indonesia, Hanuman Guardian in Thailand, Ulchi Freedom Guardian in South Korea and Orient Shield in Japan, Garver said. Some will participate in jungle training in Brunei, he said.

Planning the participation of so many Guardsmen in a leg of Pathways, which typically lasts three months, has been complex because participants will do so as part of their annual Guard training.

"You get maybe up to 21 days, depending upon how the orders are written, to participate in annual training," Garver said.

One of the ongoing goals of Pathways is to sharpen the Army's logistical skills in moving people and equipment into and around the theater. The multiple exercises test the Army's "ability to sustain your forces forward — not living on a forward operating base that contractors run for you — and the ability to keep moving along your Pathways route and participate in different tactical missions," Garver said.

The involvement of the 76th in Pathways was largely happenstance.

Each year the National Guard Bureau sends two Guard brigades for a rotation at either the National Training Center at Fort Irwin or the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Garver said. The following year those two brigades are then deployed to either USARPAC or U.S. Army Europe for regional-specific training.

Since the 76th had been scheduled years earlier to receive that regional training in the Pacific in 2018, senior leaders assigned the combat brigade to lead the second leg of Pathways this year, he said.

The lead for the third Pathways leg will be the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

The soldiers will participate in Tiger Balm and Rim of the Pacific exercises, both in Hawaii; Valiant Shield in the Pacific Ocean; and Rising Thunder in Japan.

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MILITARY



PHOTOS BY MARTIN EGNASH/Stars and Stripes

In a training scenario, "enemy forces" signal to fellow soldiers using a spotlight during the Allied Spirit VIII exercise in Hohenfels, Germany, on Monday.

Texas base under boiling order, awaits sample results

Corpus Christi (Texas) Caller-Times

Samples of water from the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi have been sent to a laboratory for microbiological analysis after a boil water notice was issued last weekend.

Francoise "Fifi" Kieschnick, a public affairs officer for the base, said the air station hoped to receive the results Tuesday.

"We believe our water is safe; we just need approval to use it," Kieschnick said.

According to a post on the air station's Facebook page, a boil water alert was issued at 10:35 p.m. Saturday because of a water main break that caused low water pressure.

The water line break was isolated about 8:50 p.m. Saturday, and system pressure was regained about 10:15 p.m.

The post stated that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality required the NASCC public water system to notify all customers to boil their water prior to consumption.

The water is safe to use for showering and washing hands but should be boiled before drinking, using for cooking or brushing teeth, the post read.

Kieschnick said the base is sending advisory notices out and using social media to provide updates on the water situation.

Poland leads grueling war games

BY MARTIN EGNASH

Stars and Stripes



Sgt. 1st Class Levi Osler prepares a training Claymore Mine during the exercise.

HOHENFELS, Germany — For the first time, a Polish brigade led the Allied Spirit exercise, which this year brought together 4,100 soldiers from the United States and nine other NATO and partner nations for a fight against a mock foe.

The three-week exercise, which began Jan. 15, wrapped up on Monday. U.S. soldiers played the enemy.

"This is a new experience for Poland, leading the exercise," said the Polish brigade's operations officer, Capt. Tomasz Klimczak. "It's important that different nations like Poland can be in charge of a large exercise like this and work hand in hand with the American soldiers."

During the mock fight, enemy forces use a variety of measures against the multinational force, including chemical weapons attacks, artillery bombardment and heavy tanks, to overrun the Polish-led force during the first few days of the fighting.

The large and varied enemy attacks have inflicted a significant number of notional casualties on the allied forces. The aim is to make the fight realistic and to test the readiness of their medical staff, said David Edwards, a medical observer, coach and trainer.

The allied forces set up defensive positions deep within the forests and stage ambushes to hold off the attackers.

The multinational force turned the tides of the battle on Jan. 23, going on the offensive.

"We have to be prepared to operate together and fight a battle like this because, nowadays we have the same problems," Klimczak said.

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Left: Polish soldiers go on patrol. Right: U.S. Army soldiers guard their position.

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WAR/MILITARY

DOD: Gag Order on Afghan data 'human error'

By **ROBERT BURNS**
AND **LORETA C. BALDOR**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In an abrupt reversal, the U.S. military on Tuesday said it made a mistake when it ordered an independent federal auditor to stop providing the public with information about U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan that help to measure how the 16-year-old stalemate war is going. Just hours after the report was publicly released, the U.S.-led NATO coalition in Afghanistan issued a statement blaming "human error" for the order, and provided a few segments of the data that have been restricted. The newly released information revealed that 44 percent of Afghanistan is contested or under the control of insurgents.

Other previously available information on the size, attitude and performance of the Afghan

forces continue to be unavailable.

President Donald Trump has announced a new Afghanistan strategy aimed at breaking a battlefield stalemate by accelerating Afghan-led operations against the Taliban and other insurgent groups in the country. On Monday, Trump railed against the recent string of attacks in Afghanistan, and ruled out any U.S. discussions with the Taliban as part of the effort to seek peace talks between the Afghan government and the insurgents.

The auditing agency, established by Congress and known as the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR, revealed the new gag order in a three-month assessment of conditions in Afghanistan released overnight.

The restrictions seemed to contradict previous Pentagon assertions that it was striving to be

more transparent about the U.S. war campaigns across Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

In response to the release of the report, Navy Capt. Tom Gresback, coalition spokesman, said Tuesday that about 56 percent of the country's 407 districts are under Afghan government control, 30 percent are contested and 14 percent are under insurgent control.

"It was NOT the intent of Resolute Support to withhold or classify information which was available in prior reports," Gresback said in an email. "A human error in labeling occurred."

Late last year, a Pentagon report said the Afghan government has control or influence over 60 percent of the population, while insurgents had control or influence over approximately 10 percent of the population, with the remainder contested.

In November, Gen. John Nicholson told Pentagon reporters that about 64 percent of the population was controlled by the government, 24 percent live in contested areas, and the Taliban control the remaining 12 percent. Neither the Pentagon nor Nicholson details the number of districts held by each side, so it is difficult to compare that with the population figures released by Gresback.

Over the years, the SIGAR auditing effort has revealed many dubious practices by the U.S., including instances of contractor fraud. Since January 2016 it had published data on the number of governing districts controlled by Kabul, the number controlled by the Taliban, and the number that are contested.

John F. Sopko, head of the auditing organization, expressed disappointment that the Pentagon initially had forbidden release of

the data on relative control of the governing districts.

"The number of districts controlled or influenced by the Afghan government had been one of the last remaining publicly available indicators for members of Congress — many of whose staff do not have access to the classified annexes to SIGAR reports — and for the American public of how the 16-year-long U.S. effort to secure Afghanistan is faring," he added.

Sopko wrote that historically, the number of districts controlled or influenced by the government has been falling since his office began reporting on it, while the number controlled or influenced by the insurgents has been rising — "a fact that should cause even more concern about its disappearance from public disclosure and discussion."

Selva: N. Korea yet to demonstrate it has ICBM that can hit America

By **COREY DICKSTEIN**
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — North Korea's ballistic missile program made significant strides last year, but the nation has not yet demonstrated the technology needed to strike distant targets, such as the U.S. mainland, the Pentagon's Nov. 2 general said Tuesday.

North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile tests in 2017 showed Kim Jong Un's regime has developed missiles with the range to reach the United States, though it still appears to lack key components necessary to hit intended targets, said Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. North Korea has failed to prove it possesses a re-entry vehicle, the portion of the missile designed to re-enter the atmosphere, capable of surviving atmospheric stress and delivering a warhead to a target or a guidance system necessary to direct the bomb to its destination, he said.

"Those are the kinds of things you have to be able to do," Selva told reporters during a breakfast meeting in Washington. "It's possible he has them, so we have to place the bet that he might have them, but he hasn't demonstrated them."

China's assessment matches Defense Secretary Jim Mattis' statement last month that he did not view North Korea's missile program as a "capable threat" now to the U.S. mainland. Mattis declined to elaborate on his earlier saying that the Pentagon was continuing to assess North Korea's most recent ICBM launch. North Korea launched ICBMs for the first time in 2017, testing its long-range missiles July 4, July 29 and Nov. 29.

Selva said Tuesday that North Korea has grown adept at hiding

its missile program and evading American spy satellites. Nonetheless, if Kim's regime had the proven capability to hit a specific target with an ICBM, the American intelligence community would likely know.

For example, it is highly unlikely North Korea could test a re-entry vehicle in one of its underground test sites, Selva said, meaning such a test would almost certainly take place in open air where the United States could observe it.

Kim's regime also has yet to fire an ICBM in a standard trajectory that would send the missile long distances, which Selva said would be necessary to test the missile's capabilities accurately. ICBMs are classified as missiles capable of traveling in excess of 3,400 miles.

In all three ICBM launches in 2017, North Korea fired its missiles at steep angles. In its most recent and most powerful test, the missile flew for nearly an hour, traveling 600 miles and reaching an altitude of 2,800 miles, according to U.S. military estimates.

That missile could have traveled more than 8,000 miles, far enough to hit anywhere on the U.S. mainland, had it been launched at a standard trajectory, warned prominent arms-control expert John Wright, who is with the Union of Concerned Scientists.

But it still lacked all the necessary components of an ICBM capable of striking its intended target, Selva said Tuesday.

Senior U.S. military officials have long said they are developing military plans to counter a North Korean missile attack should tensions boil over into violence. But Selva declined to speculate about a first-strike option against Kim's missile program.

"Our method of warfare [is] if they launch one, then game on,"

he said.

But Selva also said it was unlikely the United States would see signs that the North Koreans were preparing for an imminent missile attack in time to launch a strike to halt it.

The North Koreans have stringent concealment and deception protocols designed to camouflage their ballistic missile program, which includes newly developed methods for moving missiles to launch sites that are nearly undetectable, he said.

"We are as diligent as we can possibly be about watching and cataloging their ballistic missile capability, but it is very unlikely that in a tactical situation we would get any of the indications or warnings that would precede a launch," Selva said.

He added if the United States "blacked out" and observed the missiles being prepared for launch, North Korea could launch within about "a dozen minutes or so."

The good news, Selva said, is U.S. satellite and radar detectors have shown they can detect North Korea's missiles almost immediately after a rocket is airborne. Those detectors can determine within moments whether the missiles pose a threat to the United States and prepare ground-based intercept systems in California and Alaska to engage the target, if necessary.

Tensions between the United States and North Korea have relaxed somewhat in recent weeks since the North agreed to talks with South Korea ahead of next month's Olympics in the South's Pyeongchang. The Pentagon has said it is delaying major military exercises on the Korean Peninsula until the Olympic and Paralympic games have concluded in mid-March.

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TIMOTHY SCHUMAKER/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Lt. j.g. Patrick Shine surveys damage caused by Hurricane Harvey at the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi fire station in Texas, August.

Climate: Cost estimates not part of survey

FROM FRONT PAGE

Extreme cold and heat affected 351 sites, while wildfire impacted 210.

Just under half the surveyed sites — 1,684 — reported no effects.

The sites surveyed included airfield operations, piers, training ranges, headquarters buildings, information systems sites, fuel sites, wastewater facilities, historical/cultural spots, emergency services, housing and others.

Among the site types reporting one or more climate effects were airfield operations, wastewater systems and training ranges.

"As I look at the conclusions here, it's important to recognize the breadth of the installation enterprise that's affected by some climate factor," said John Conger, a senior policy adviser with the Center for Climate and Security, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank. "Even if you're not on the coast, you're still going to be affected. It demonstrates the breadth of the impact, if not the severity."

The survey was initiated while Conger was the acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, a position he left in late 2015.

"We were trying to get a sense

of the vulnerability of our installations across the enterprise, not necessarily anecdotally, but comprehensively. Who was being impacted by various climate factors? This particular report doesn't measure changes over time so it's not as much climate change as climate impact," Conger said.

The survey does not offer cost estimates to fix the vulnerabilities it found.

Rapid climate change is projected to exacerbate flooding, drought and wildfires, and "the reasonable expectation is that vulnerabilities to military sites will increase unless significant resources are devoted to adapting DOD assets to this changing operational environment, and/or the rate and scale of climate change is reduced," the Center for Climate and Security said in a statement Monday.

The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act requires a report by the end of this year identifying the military installations most vulnerable to negative climate change effects and how they might be mitigated.

The survey sent recently to Congress will be key in that assessment, Conger said.

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WAR ON TERRORISM



PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN/Stars and Stripes

John J. Sullivan, deputy secretary of state, speaks to U.S. troops at NATO's Resolute Support headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Tuesday.

Official: US still aiming for Afghan peace talks despite Trump remarks

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The United States remains committed to forging peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government John J. Sullivan, deputy secretary of state, said Tuesday, despite contrary comments made by President Donald Trump following an escalation of attacks in Kabul.

Sullivan said during a visit to the Afghan capital that Washington's Afghanistan policy, which aims to use military might to force insurgents to the negotiating table, has not changed and isn't expected to do so.

Sullivan said that Trump's statement — that he didn't foresee the possibility of talks with the Taliban — was prompted by recent bloodshed in Afghanistan and “an indication that at least some members of the Taliban are not interested in having a discussion about a peaceful future for Afghanistan.”

“That doesn't change the long-range strategy of our policy, which is to be firm militarily to convince the Taliban, or significant elements of the Taliban, that there isn't a military solution to the security situation here,” he said.

Trump cast doubt on negotiations Monday, the same day a group of Taliban militants attempted to storm a military base in Kabul, killing 11 Afghan soldiers. It was the latest in a string of attacks claimed by the Taliban and Islamic State.

“We don't want to talk to the Taliban,” Trump told reporters at the White House. “We're going to finish what we have to finish, what nobody else has been able to finish; we're going to be able to do it.”

On Saturday, an ambulance packed with explosives was detonated in central Kabul, killing more than 100, in one of the

deadliest attacks of the war. A week before that attack, six Taliban gunmen stormed the city's Intercontinental Hotel, where they battled security forces for more than 12 hours and killed at least 22 people, including four Americans.

“It's a whole different fight over there. They're killing people left and right. Innocent people are being killed left and right,” Trump said. “I don't see any talking taking place.”

More American troops have been sent to Afghanistan in recent months, and the number of U.S. airstrikes in the country has skyrocketed under Trump's new strategy, which military officials have said is aimed at pushing the Taliban to the negotiating table.

The Taliban on Tuesday criticized Trump's comments, saying Afghanistan “has a long and rich history of bringing arrogant invaders to their senses.”

“Donald Trump and his war-mongering supporters must understand that every action has an equal and opposite reaction,” Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the insurgent group said in a statement. “If you insist upon war, our Mujahid nation will not welcome you with roses.”

Sullivan said that one aim of his visit, during which he met with President Ashraf Ghani, was to demonstrate U.S. commitment to the Afghan government.

Sullivan also met with Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, and U.S. troops at NATO's Resolute Support headquarters.

“Thank you for all you do,” Sullivan told the group of service members Tuesday morning. “You know better than I how important this mission is. It's a great honor for me to be here in person and thank you.”

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Taliban, ISIS compete for credit in rise of violence

By KATHY GANNON
Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Islamic State and the Taliban are competing to take credit for a horrific spike in violence in Afghanistan over the last month, and analysts say both insurgent groups are growing in strength as security forces wither under their relentless attacks and a feuding government struggles to win over citizens.

Still, the two insurgent groups embrace different agendas and are at war with each other as well as the Afghan government, analysts say.

Recent large-scale attacks, which have included both suicide bombings and small-arms fire, have left nearly 200 people dead and hundreds more wounded. Insurgents have targeted seemingly heavily secure areas in the heart of the Afghan capital, including an Afghan military academy Monday and a hotel, owned by the government and frequented by foreigners, earlier this month. Using an ambulance to hide their deadly cargo, insurgents slipped passed checkpoints in Kabul's heavily fortified center Saturday to kill more than 100 people. They also targeted an international aid organization in eastern Jalalabad and a Shiite cultural center in Kabul.

Afghan Security Forces seem powerless against the onslaught.

Insurgents share the same goal of delegitimizing the governments they are fighting against, said Andrew Wilder, vice president of Asia programs at the U.S. Institute of Peace. However, in Afghanistan the similarity between ISIS and the Taliban ends there. Beyond toppling the Afghan government, ISIS and the Taliban have divergent goals, and where the Taliban are seen as possible negotiating partners in a search for peace, ISIS is not.

The two groups have occasionally clashed on the battlefield. “The Taliban and ISIS are clearly competitors in the Afghan arena,” said Thomas Ruttig, whose Afghan Analysts network has deep knowledge of the country and has conducted nationwide studies into myriad issues confounding the country, including ISIS and the Taliban.

“The Taliban I see as ‘national Islamists’ while ISIS is ‘Internationalist,’” he said, dismissing reports of collaboration between the two insurgent groups, attributing them to rumors and bickering in northern Afghanistan within the Taliban.

Ruttig said Taliban fighters in northern Afghanistan recently flew the ISIS flag after the Taliban leadership ordered them to hand over their tax collection revenue to the governing Taliban shura or council. A major source of revenue for the Taliban is the tax or tolls they charge local resi-



JOSH SMITH/Stars and Stripes

Smoke and dust surround Afghan National Army soldiers as they fire at a compound occupied by Taliban fighters in Nangarhar province after clearing areas as part of Operation Iron Triangle in 2015.

dents for safe passage or to move legal as well as illegal commodities to market.

“The groups in the north are a separate phenomenon. There, Taliban commanders have switched to use ISIS insignia, but the trigger was conflict over transferring taxes to the central leadership,” said Ruttig.

‘The Taliban and ISIS are clearly competitors in the Afghan arena.’

Thomas Ruttig
Afghan Analysts

The strongest fighting force within the Taliban is the Haqqani network, which has been blamed for the most audacious attacks in Kabul. The Haqqani network has historical ties to Pakistan's powerful ISI spy agency, and both the United States and Afghanistan accuse Pakistan of providing sanctuary for Taliban fighters, a claim Islamabad denies. Pakistan in turn has blamed some of the most horrific attacks in Pakistan on ISIS affiliate insurgents in Afghanistan, accusing Kabul of allowing them space to plot their attacks.

Meanwhile, the ISIS affiliate known as Islamic State in Khorasan Province, named for the ancient region that once included Afghanistan, parts of Iran and Central Asia, is a toxic mix of disgruntled Taliban, ferocious Paki-

stani Taliban, who have sworn allegiance to ISIS against Pakistan, as well as Uzbeks, mostly from the Islamic movement of the Uzbekistan terrorist group.

The success of the U.S. and its allies in driving ISIS fighters out of Iraq and Syria has pushed many toward Afghanistan, said Brian Glyn Williams, author of “Counter Jihad, The American Military Experience in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.” Bolstering their ranks, he said, is Afghanistan's own Uzbek population living in northern Afghanistan, who have been drifting toward ISIS as a protracted feud between President Ashraf Ghani and his vice president and Uzbek warlord, Rashid Dostum, deepens.

The role of Afghanistan's neighbors further muddies the insurgent landscape, say those familiar with the region.

Pakistan, widely blamed for the Taliban's longevity as a fighting force, is aided by both Russia and Iran, who fear an ISIS stronghold in Afghanistan.

“Pakistan has a deep interest in ensuring that the Taliban doesn't partner with [ISIS],” said Michael Kugelmann, deputy director of the Asia Program at the U.S.-based Wilson Center. “There's good reason to believe that Russia and also Iran have provided levels of support to the Taliban.”

“The last thing Russia and Iran want are a resurgent [ISIS] in their broader backyard,” he said.

VETERANS

VA resumes online applications for new ID cards

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Veterans can again submit online applications for new identification cards through the Department of Veterans Affairs website after the system was taken down in December following rollout problems.

The purpose of the identification cards is to help veterans prove their military history without hav-

ing to carry around their DD-214 certificates, which contain sensitive information. The new IDs do not replace VA medical cards or defense retiree cards, nor do they qualify as official government-issued identification.

As of Monday, the VA was processing 14,609 applications for the cards, said VA spokesman Curt Cashour. Any veteran who served in the armed forces, including in

the reserves, and has an honorable or general discharge can request them.

High demand for the cards crashed a VA webpage in December, when some veterans were met with error messages or a webpage that failed to load. The VA temporarily stopped the online application process and asked veterans seeking new ID cards to leave their email addresses, stating

they'd be notified when they could apply.

Now, the online application process has resumed to all veterans. Cashour said veterans are no longer being asked to leave their email addresses.

Veterans can apply at <https://www.vets.gov/veteran-id-card/> and will be asked to create an online account.

Veterans who have applied will start receiving their cards in

early March, Cashour said. In the meantime, approved veterans can download an image of their IDs and print them or download them to their mobile phones.

In 2015, Congress ordered the VA to create the cards to make it easier for veterans to receive certain benefits such as discounts at stores and restaurants.

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Families leaving dilemma at Vietnam Veterans Memorial

By MICHAEL E. RUANE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — When Vietnam veteran Gordon J. Castro died six years ago, his older brother, Leon, had him cremated and placed his remains in a specially inscribed, stainless steel box.

He glued on Gordon's Purple Heart medal, his silver-and-blue Combat Infantryman Badge and a 1st Cavalry Division insignia.

Then he got into his Ford pickup, put the box on the passenger seat and drove from Corpus Christi, Texas, to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington to fulfill his brother's wish that he be laid to rest at the wall.

It was hard to leave him so far from home, Castro said, but Gordon had said he "left the better part of himself" in Vietnam.

Gordon Castro's remains are among scores that have been left at the Wall over the years in gestures of devotion but in a practice the National Park Service is now trying to stop.

With the aging population of Vietnam veterans, the 50th anniversary of the worst year of fighting and Ken Burns' powerful Vietnam War documentary, the Park Service said, there has been an increase in remains being left.

"It's been happening for years and years," said Janet Folkerts, a Park Service curator. "But it's becoming more and more of an issue. ... It's something that we have to definitely deal with."

Last fall, signs were erected at the Wall telling visitors that human remains "and associated objects" should not be left or scattered there or anywhere on the Mall.

Leaving mementos at the Wall has been a tradition since the polished stone memorial bearing the names of the 58,000 Vietnam War dead was dedicated in 1982.

Hundreds of thousands of letters, photographs, jungle boots, stuffed animals, sculptures, dog tags, college rings, a motorcycle, cigarette, a piece of a letter, rotor blade and other human remains have been left.

The artifacts are gathered and stored in the Park Service's large Museum Resource Center in suburban Maryland. The human remains are kept in a locked metal cabinet with the windows papered over.

All types, sizes

About 70 cremains — some in containers, some scattered — have been left at the Wall over the years, said Folkerts, a curator at the resource center. The first were left in 1990, she said. The most recent appeared several weeks ago. Thirty-one have been left in the past five years, including five in 2017.

Dick Lundskow's family and friends left two small manila packets there last Memorial Day. He wasn't a veteran but was devoted to veterans' causes, his daughter, Angela Childers, said, and would have wanted part of him left there.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ROBINSON CHAVEZ/The Washington Post

Mike Litterst, a spokesman for the National Mall and Memorial Parks, and curator Laura Anderson remove containers left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial from a cabinet at the National Park Service archive in Landover, Md.



MICHAEL RUANE/The Washington Post

Left: Some cremains come in elaborate containers, others in simple baggies or envelopes. Right: This box contains the remains of Vietnam War vet Gordon Castro.

Some cremains are in wooden, glass or metal tins. Some are in small, pill-style boxes. Some are in plastic bags or Tupperware containers, according to a Park Service list.

A 155 mm artillery shell casing said to contain the cremains of a Daniel Dhee Hughes was left in 2006.

A silver container labeled "Martin Ranko" still bears the logo of the Long Island Cremation Co. of West Babylon, N.Y. It was left on Veterans Day weekend in 1990.

An envelope containing the cremains of Roger B. Probst Sr. was left June 21, 1991. Someone had written on the envelope: "You finally made it. Enjoy your reunion. ..."

Many of the containers are not marked with a name, said Laura Anderson, curator for the Mall and Memorial Parks.

"We don't have a way of knowing if it's even a Vietnam vet," she said. "Some of them could be other family members. They could be veterans from other wars. ..."

Spokesman Mike Litterst said the re-

mains can't be added to the Park Service's official collections.

"We're not permitted," he said. "And right now, we don't have an answer for what to do with these remains. But we do know that they won't become part of the collections."

Most parks do allow the scattering of remains under certain circumstances and with a permit. But rules vary from park to park, according to regulations provided by Litterst.

Shenandoah National Park in Virginia allows scattering but does not allow urns.

At Pearl Harbor, cremains of survivors of the World War II attack on the USS Arizona can be placed in urns aboard the sunken wreck. And the ashes of Pearl Harbor attack survivors can be spread in the harbor.

Yosemite National Park in California prohibits scattering from the air. It requires remains to be further "pulverized" after cremation and prohibits any publicity of the scattering event.

Colonial National Historical Park, also in

Virginia, allows scattering by air but from a minimum altitude of 2,000 feet and not over developed areas or bodies of water.

The Wall is unique.

"A lot of Vietnam veterans feel very connected to the memorial," Folkerts said. "It speaks to them in a way that many other places in the country don't. So they would like to become part of it."

Jan Scruggs, founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, which built the Wall, said in a email: "Many veterans and their families want ashes spread at THE WALL and will do as they please. The vets want to be reunited with those who they remember as 'forever young' who laid down their lives in Vietnam, and to ease their pain that time cannot heal."

Leon Castro, 70, said that in the final months of his brother's life, Gordon abruptly announced he wanted his remains left at the Wall.

Brothers both vets

Both men had served in Vietnam but had rarely talked about their experiences, he said in a telephone interview from Corpus Christi. The men and their sister, Linda, had been raised there by a single mother who worked as a secretary.

Leon, a retired carpenter, had gone to Vietnam first, serving in 1966 and 1967.

Gordon entered the Army and served in the infantry with the 1st Air Cavalry Division in 1970 and '71. He was once wounded by shrapnel in a mortar attack, Leon said.

He lived in Victoria, Texas, and worked at a nearby Alcoa plant. His sister said he was a gentle person who played the violin and did fine woodworking. He had been married and divorced twice and had no children. But the brothers were very close.

When Gordon got sick, he asked to be cremated, Leon said. And "one day, out of the blue, said he wanted me to take his ... remains and leave them on the Wall."

"I didn't quite understand it," he said. "Trying to figure out why he wanted that, I asked him, and he just said he felt he left the better part of himself" in Vietnam.

Gordon died April 20, 2012, at age 61.

Castro had the box specially fabricated and engraved. He drove the 1,600 miles from Corpus Christi to Washington. He put the box down near the center of the Wall and walked away. Feeling a pang, he went back and picked it up, but then put it down again and left.

Castro said he had called someone in the Park Service — he believes at the resource center — before he made the trip from Texas. He said he was unsure if it was OK to leave the remains. Litterst, the Park Service spokesman, said that person was mistaken or misinformed.

Asked about the agency's new effort to halt the practice, Leon Castro said in an email: "It is understandable. Caring for the dead is one of the best parts of the Wall is an eternal responsibility."

NATION

Emergency worker thought threat on Hawaii was real

By TALI ARBEL
Associated Press

A Hawaii employee who mistakenly sent an alert warning of an incoming ballistic missile earlier this month, creating a panic across the state, thought an actual attack was imminent, the Federal Communications Commission said Tuesday.

Hawaii has been testing alert capabilities, and the employee for the state Emergency Management Agency mistook a drill for a real warning about a missile threat. He responded by sending the alert without sign-off from a supervisor at a time when there are fears over the threat of nuclear-tipped missiles from North Korea.

"There were no procedures in place to prevent a single person from mistakenly sending a missile alert" in Hawaii, said James Wiley, a cybersecurity and communications liability staffer at the FCC. There was no requirement to double-check with a colleague or get a supervisor's approval, he said.

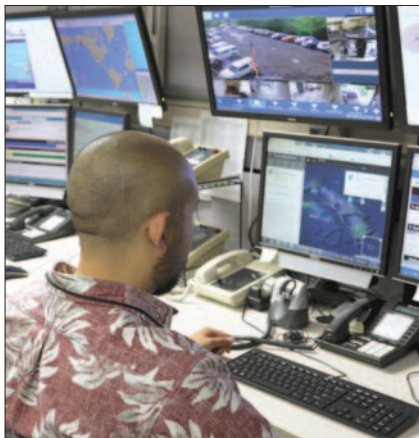
In addition, software at Hawaii's emergency agency used

the same prompts for both test and actual alerts, and it generally used prepared text that made it easy for a staffer to click through the alerting process without focusing enough on the text of the warning that would be sent.

The worker, whose name has not been released, has refused to talk to the FCC, but federal regulators got information from his written statement that state officials provided. The employee still works at the state Emergency Management Agency but has been reassigned to a job without access to the warning system.

The alert was sent to cell-phones, TV and radio stations in Hawaii on Jan. 13, leading people to fear the state was under nuclear attack. It took 38 minutes for officials to send an alert retracting the warning because Hawaii did not have a standardized system for sending such corrections, the FCC said.

The federal agency, which regulates the nation's airwaves and sets standards for such emergency alerts, criticized the state's alerting in correcting it. The FCC said the state Emer-



CALEB JONES/AP

Hawaii Emergency Management Agency officials work at the agency's command center in Honolulu in December. An employee who sent an alert warning of an incoming ballistic missile this month thought an actual attack was imminent, the FCC said Tuesday.

gency Management Agency has already taken steps to try to avoid a repeat of the false alert, requiring more supervision of drills and alert and test-alert transmissions. It has created a correction template for false alerts and has stopped ballistic missile defense drills until its own investigation is done.

The employee in question heard a recorded message that began by saying "exercise, exer-

cise, exercise" — the script for a drill, the FCC said. Then the recording used language that is typically used for a real threat, not a drill: "This is not a drill." The recording ended by saying "exercise, exercise, exercise." The worker did not hear the "exercise, exercise, exercise" part of the message and believed the threat was real, according to the employee's statement. He responded by sending an alert.

FDA seeks to curb abuse of Imodium

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Food and Drug Administration is asking manufacturers of over-the-counter anti-diarrhea treatments to change the way they package their products in an effort to curb abuse by people with drug addictions.

Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said in a statement Tuesday that the agency was taking the "novel" action because of growing concerns that abuse of Imodium A-D and similar medications was adding to the death toll of the nation's opioid epidemic.

The products, readily available in supermarkets and drugstores, are safe when used at the recommended maximum daily dose of four 2-milligram tablets. But in large quantities, the agency warned, they can cause dangerous, irregular heartbeats and other problems potentially resulting in death.

Loperamide, the generic name for the anti-diarrheal agent involved, is sometimes referred to as "the poor man's methadone." In large quantities it induces a cheap, mild high and relieves withdrawal symptoms for drugs like hydrocodone, morphine or heroin. People with addiction problems increasingly are turning to the drug, experts say, as prescription opioids become harder to obtain because of changes in legislation and regulation.

Top jobs in Congress no longer so coveted

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Lawmakers spend their careers eyeing coveted committee chairmanships, angling for a chance at the power and perks that come with the top spot.

Republican Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, is bowing out after one term at the helm of a major panel.

Frelinghuysen's announcement Monday that he would not seek re-election, giving up the chairmanship of the House Appropriations Committee, punctuated the dwindling prestige and influence of the positions once considered an apex of power on Capitol Hill. Term limits, legislative dysfunction and gridlock-inducing polarization have gradually tarnished the chairmanships that are so prized.

"Before the farm bill and my tenure as chairman, I had neither gray hair nor did I take hypertension medicine. I now have both for the rest of my life," said former House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas, R-Okla. "Right now you have to deal with a situation where you have the extreme demands of the left on one side of the room and the extreme demands of the right on the other side."

Frelinghuysen is the eighth House committee chair to head for the exits, and a striking case study for the dynamics at play.

The New Jersey Republican became chairman of the Appropriations Committee last year after serving for several years as chairman of its defense subcommittee.

But Frelinghuysen's year in charge of the panel has been frustrating. In theory, he manages the process of doling out one-third of the federal budget. But he's had scant success on that front. Although he helped successfully negotiate a catchall spending bill last spring, the appropriations process for the ongoing budget year has been hamstringing by delays in the Senate and faces the very real danger of running aground completely amid an unrelated monthslong battle over immigration.

In a push to curb corruption in 2010, Republicans cosponsored "earmarks," severely limiting lawmakers' capacity to direct tens or even hundreds of millions to one's district or state for "earmarked" pet projects. The earmarks were a prerogative of the chairman, both to bolster his political standing at home and to court votes with fellow lawmakers of either party.

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NATION

US House panel votes to release classified memo

By MARY CLARE JALONICK,
CHAD DAY
AND JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Brushing aside opposition from the Justice Department, Republicans on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence voted to release a classified memo that purports to show improper use of surveillance by the FBI and the Justice Department in the Russia investigation.

The four-page memo has become a political flashpoint, with President Donald Trump and many Republicans pushing for its release and suggesting that some in the Justice Department and FBI have conspired against the president.

The memo was written by Republicans on the committee, led by chairman Rep. Devin Nunes, of California, a close Trump ally who has become a fierce critic of the abuses of the government. Special counsel Robert Mueller is investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 election and whether Trump's campaign was involved.

Republicans have said the memo reveals grave concerns about abuses of the government's surveillance powers in the Russia investigation. Democrats have called it a selectively edited group of GOP talking points that attempt to distract from the committee's own investigation into Russian meddling.

The vote Monday to release the memo is an unprecedented move by the committee, which typically goes out of its way to protect classified information in the interest of protecting intelligence sources

and methods. The memo was delivered by courier to the White House on Monday evening. Trump now has five days to object to its release by the committee.

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway told "Fox and Friends" that the memo will be reviewed Tuesday. The White House said late Monday that Trump would meet with his national security team and White House counsel to discuss the memo in the coming days.



Schiff

Republicans said they are confident the release won't harm national security. They also said they would not release the underlying intelligence that informed the memo.

"You'll see for yourself that it's not necessary," said Texas Republican Rep. Mike Conaway, who's leading the House's Russia investigation.

But Rep. Adam Schiff, of California, the ranking Democrat on the committee, said the panel had "crossed a deeply regrettable line."

"Today, this committee voted to put the president's personal interests, perhaps their own political interest, above the national interest," he said, noting that the memo's release could compromise intelligence sources and methods.

While Trump's White House signaled he would likely support the Republican memo's release,



PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVIS/AP

Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., front right, is questioned by reporters as he arrives for a meeting of the House Intelligence Committee on Monday.

his Justice Department has voiced concerns.

In a letter to Nunes last week, Justice officials said releasing the classified memo could be "extraordinarily reckless" and asked to review it. Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd suggested that releasing classified information could damage the United States' relationship with other countries with which it shares intelligence.

After those complaints, FBI Director Christopher Wray reviewed the memo over the weekend.

Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., who was with Wray when he reviewed the memo, said the FBI director did not raise any national security concerns with him. Gowdy said the memo doesn't reveal any intelligence methods, but it does reveal "one source."

But Schiff said Wray told him Monday that the review didn't satisfy his concerns about the memo's release. Wray wanted to brief the committee about FBI and Justice Department concerns ahead of any release, a request committee Republicans blocked, Schiff said.

The FBI did not respond to a request for comment Monday evening.

It is still unclear exactly when or how the memo would be released.

In response, Democrats on the panel have put together their own memo. On Monday, the committee voted to make the Democratic memo available to all House members — but not the public. Conaway said he was open to making it public after House members have a chance to review it.

US releases long-awaited 'Putin list'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration late Monday released a long-awaited list of 114 Russian politicians and 96 "oligarchs" who have flourished under President Vladimir Putin, fulfilling a demand by Congress that the U.S. punish Moscow for interfering in the 2016 U.S. election.

The political list is the entire presidential administration, as listed on the Kremlin website, and the Russian Cabinet, while the oligarchs list is a carbon copy of the top of Forbes magazine's Russian billionaires list. The publication of the so-called "Putin list" angered and dismayed many in Moscow.

Yet the administration paired that move with a surprising announcement that it had decided not to punish anybody — for now — under new sanctions retaliating for the election meddling. Some U.S. lawmakers accused President Donald Trump of giving Russia a free pass, fueling further questions about whether the president is unwilling to confront Moscow.

The idea of the seven-page, unclassified document, as envisioned by Congress, is to name-and-shame those believed to be benefiting from Putin's tenure, just as the United States works to isolate his government diplomatically and economically.

Being on the list doesn't trigger any U.S. sanctions on the individuals, although more than a dozen already are targeted under earlier sanctions.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev is among the 114 senior political figures in Russia's government who made the list, along with 42 of Putin's aides, Cabinet ministers such as Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and top officials in Russia's leading spy agencies, the FSB and GRU. The CEOs of major state-owned companies, including energy giant Rosneft and Sberbank, also are on the list.

So are 96 wealthy Russians deemed "oligarchs" by the Treasury Department, which said each is believed to have assets totaling \$1 billion or more. Some are the most famous of wealthy Russians, among them tycoons Roman Abramovich and Mikhail Prokhorov, who challenged Putin in 2012 election. Aluminum magnate Oleg Deripaska, a figure in the Russia investigation over his ties to former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, is included.

Even more names, including those of less senior politicians or businesspeople worth less than \$1 billion, are on a classified version of the list being provided to Congress, officials said. Drawing on U.S. intelligence, Treasury also finalized a list of at least partially state-owned companies in Russia, but that list, too, was classified and sent only to Congress.

Russian politicians have expressed dismay at finding that the list included the entire Russian government.

Calif. Senate approves medication abortion on campuses

By JONATHAN J. COOPER
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California would be the first state to require public universities to offer medication abortion under legislation approved in the state Senate Monday, a bill that if signed into law would mark a vast expansion of a service that is rare on college campuses.

None of the 34 University of California or California State University campuses currently offer abortion services at their health centers, instead referring students to outside providers.

A group of private donors, some of them anonymous, plan to pay for up to \$20 million in startup costs, including ultrasound equipment and training for both medical and billing staff.

The bill still needs Assembly approval.

It would require all university campuses to offer the service by 2022, assuming the donors come through with the money. Medication abortion can be administered up to 10 weeks into a pregnancy.

"I firmly believe that all students should be

able to decide what to do with their own bodies and when to factor a family into their life."

"I firmly believe that all students should be able to decide what to do with their own bodies and when to factor a family into their life."

Sen. Connie Leyva
D-Chino, Calif.

second drug to take later at home. The medications induce bleeding similar to a miscarriage, according to legislative records.

The bill's supporters say time is of the essence for women seeking a medication abortion, which must occur within the first 10 weeks

of pregnancy. Dispensing the medication on campus will ensure that women have access, even if they don't have a car or have trouble fitting an outside appointment into their school schedule, Leyva said.

Outside providers also may not accept student health insurance plans.

But CSU officials worry the mandate would impose severe costs for liability insurance, safety improvements, medical training and round-the-clock phone support for medical emergencies, said Toni Molle, a spokeswoman for the CSU chancellor's office.

"Currently, our CSU health centers offer basic health services. However, the administration of medications still requires a level of expertise that our health center staff may not have," Molle said.

It's unclear how many colleges outside California offer access to medication abortion on campus. Marj Plumb, chief strategist for the Women's Foundation of California, said no other state requires campus health centers to offer medication abortion.

NATION

Teacher faces backlash for anti-military remarks

By ELI ROSENBERG
The Washington Post

A teacher and city council member in a small town on the outskirts of Los Angeles became the subject of harsh criticism after a video of him criticizing the military was shared widely on the internet.

Gregory Salcido, who works at a high school in Pico Rivera said in the video that members of the military fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan were "the lowest of our low" in a rant about how long the wars overseas have dragged on. The video was reportedly taken in the middle of a history class he was teaching.

"Because we have a bunch of dumbs-over there," he said in the video. "Think about the people who you know who are over there. Your freaking stupid Uncle Louie or whatever. They're dumb (expletive). They're not like high-level thinkers, they're not academic people, they're not intellectual people. They're the lowest of our low."

The video appears to have been surreptitiously recorded. It was published on Facebook by a woman who tagged the post from Connecticut, said the student who filmed it was a friend's son, and urged her followers to help her "make this go viral." It spread widely after it was picked up by conservative media outlets across the country. The person taking the video appears to be wearing a Marines sweatshirt.

"So, if you join the military, it's because you had no other options," he said. "It's because you didn't take care of business academically because your parents didn't love you enough to push you and then you didn't love yourself enough to push yourself."

Kimberlie Plauto tweeted: "Help me make this go viral. My friends son was sporting his marine sweater while this liberal douche teacher rants about..."

Salcido spoke in loaded terms about the United States' foes, saying the military was losing to "dudes wearing freaking robes and chancas (flip-flops)" in the Middle East.

"The data is in, we don't have a good military," he said. "We couldn't beat the Vietnamese. They're a bunch of people this freaking big throwing rice at us."

He also criticized military recruiters in public schools. "It's a lie that our military is freaking bitching," he said. "Why after the national anthem do we have a killing machine fly over the freaking stadium? You know, the stealth bomber comes in. Everyone's all, 'Yeah.' Like, 'That's what we kill people with, woo.' Why would that be something we celebrate?"

The video has now been viewed more than 6 million times after it was picked up by Fox News, the Blaze and Breitbart in addition to local news sites in California.

"I'm respectfully requesting a meeting with you @ArlingtonNatl Section 60, Grave 9927," wrote Karen Vaughn, whose son Aaron was killed in Afghanistan in 2011, to Salcido on Twitter. "I will pay all of your expenses. You and I should begin a conversation for the sake of all that's good."

"Instead of teaching the next generation

how to read and write, many taxpayer-funded schools are teaching children how to hate America," conservative radio host Todd Starnes wrote on his show's website in a piece about the incident. "I salute this 17-year-old young man who boldly took a stand in his classroom by exposing his foul-mouthed, military-hating teacher. May God bless this great American patriot."

The Pentagon commented in a Breitbart story about the comments, as spokeswoman Amber Smith told the site that she had seen the teacher's remarks and that they were "very uninformed."

The El Rancho Unified School District did not respond to a request for comment.

This is not the first time Salcido has been in the news. In 2010, he was placed on administrative leave after a parent complained about his classroom conduct, according to the Whittier Daily News. About two years later, he was again placed on leave after the Sheriff's Department received a complaint that he struck a student, according to the Los Angeles Daily News.

Hackers bring ATM 'jackpotting' to US

By AVI SELK
The Washington Post

Hackers able to make ATMs spit cash like winning slot machines are now operating inside the United States, marking the arrival of "jackpotting" attacks after widespread heists in Europe and Asia, according to security news website Krebs on Security.

Thieves have used skimming devices on ATM machines to steal debit card information, but "jackpotting" augurs more sophisticated technological challenges that American financial firms will face in coming years.

"This is the first instance of jackpotting in the United States," said digital security reporter Brian Krebs, a former Washington Post reporter. "It's safe to assume that these are here to stay at this point."

On his website, Krebs reported Saturday that the Secret Service has warned financial institutions about "jackpotting" attacks in the past few days, though specifics have not been revealed.

He cited an alert sent by ATM maker NCR Corp. to its customers:

"This represents the first confirmed cases of losses due to logical attacks in the U.S.," the alert read. "This should be treated as a call to action to take appropriate steps to protect their ATMs against these forms of attack and mitigate any consequences."

Krebs reported that criminal gangs are targeting Diebold Nixdorf machines — the stand-alone kind you might see in a drive-through or pharmacy. He shared the ATM giant's security notice. It described similar attacks in Mexico, in which criminals used a modified medical endoscope to access a port inside the machines and install malware.

Diebold Nixdorf spokesman Mike Jacobsen declined to provide the number of banks targeted in Mexico and the United States or comment on losses, according to Reuters.

Hackers have also been reported to remotely infect ATMs or completely swap out their hard drives. The Secret Service could not be immediately reached for comment about the nature of the reported U.S. attacks.

Whichever method is used, the results are about the same.

Small-scale jackpotting attacks were reported sporadically in many countries over the next few years, according to Reuters. They finally went big time in 2016.

A gang stole \$13 million from Japanese ATMs in three hours that spring, Fortune wrote. In the summer, loose cash was spotted fluttering around dozens of First Commercial Bank ATMs in Taipei, Taiwan.

First Commercial subsequently froze withdrawals at more than 1,000 ATMs, according to the BBC. A police investigation revealed masked thieves had been waiting in front of the hacked machines and carried cash away by the bag load — more than \$2 million across the country.

The Government Savings Bank in Thailand was hit with a similar attack the next month, the Wall Street Journal reported.

By the end of 2016, jackpotters had struck more than a dozen countries across Europe, too, Reuters reported.

The FBI warned American banks at the time that they could be the next victims.

If Krebs is correct, at least one U.S. bank now is.



JAMES CARBONE, NEWSDAY/AP

Emergency landing

A small plane made an emergency landing and flipped over at Robert Moses State Park in Babylon, N.Y., on Monday. WABC said a pilot and two teenage flight students were aboard the plane when it apparently developed mechanical problems. No serious injuries were reported.

School: Boy, 7, restrained for hitting teacher

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON
Associated Press

MIAMI — School district officials in Florida said they followed standard protocol last week when a 7-year-old boy was placed in handcuffs and removed from his school — and they say it is the second time since the school year began that the first-grader had to be restrained after displaying aggressive behavior.

The latest episode happened Jan. 25, when a teacher at the Coral Way K-8 Center in Miami told the boy to stop playing with his food in the cafeteria. When the child refused to stop, he was taken from the cafeteria, according to an incident report from Miami-Dade County Public Schools police officer Munick Soriano.

The report said the boy hit the teacher repeatedly in the back when they were in a hallway outside the cafeteria. The child continued punching and kicking the teacher until they both fell on the ground, according to the report,

which also said he grabbed her hair.

The boy was hospitalized briefly at Miami Children's Hospital under the Florida Mental Health Act, based on behavioral criteria that indicated he could pose a threat to himself or others, school district officials said. Authorities said it was the second time officers had resorted to handcuffing the student under the same law.

The child's mother, Mercy Alvarez, said her son doesn't have a mental disorder. Instead, she called her son's treatment "police abuse."

She recorded the incident of her son last week with her cellphone and shared it on Facebook, where it has been viewed nearly 3 million times.

In his report, Soriano wrote that another teacher and several students witnessed the incident, which was also captured on the school's surveillance camera. The boy's parents were notified and came to the school, the report said.

The child's father agreed with school officials that the child should be taken to a mental health facility, the report said. But the mother disagreed, telling officials nothing was wrong with her son.

The teacher told the officer her back was hurting after the incident but she didn't have any visible injuries. She told officials she intends to press charges, the report said.

Later Monday, school district officials released a report showing this was the second time the boy had been restrained at school and taken to the same hospital for an examination. According to the report, the student punched students and staff members on Nov. 30 and acted aggressively toward Soriano when he responded.

The district said the boy was allowed to ride with a parent to the hospital that time.

Alvarez said neither she nor the child's father was allowed to accompany him, either in November or last week.

NATION

Amazon shows off 'The Spheres'

By SALLY HO
Associated Press

SEATTLE — From the fourth floor of a striking rainforestlike conservatory built of glass and white steel in downtown Seattle, Amazon.com boss Jeff Bezos turned toward the top of his newest headquarters building to summon his favorite assistant.

In a proud little show on Monday for the media and dignitaries — which also doubled as product placement for Amazon's voice assistant — the world's richest man ordered out loud, symbolically, "Alexa, open The Spheres."

The domed structure is only steps away from the executive office tower where Bezos leads the online retail behemoth. It's part of the company's urban campus near downtown Seattle that is largely made up of unmarked office buildings where more than 40,000 people report to work.

The four-story Spheres structure from the outside looks like three connected glass orbs planted into the ground in a caterpillar shape. Lighting mimics a position near the equator, with 12 hours of shade and sun. During the day, the interior is maintained at 72 degrees with 60 percent humidity to emulate a cloud forest ecosystem.

Amazon's Amazonesque rainforestlike conservatory is now home to more than 40,000 plants from 50 countries on five continents. Its centerpiece is a 50-foot fig tree. Most plants will flower and some can yield fruit, though visitors must keep their hands off all plant life. About 90 percent of the plants were grown and tended to in a suburban greenhouse for years in anticipation of their permanent home in The Spheres.

Though masked by nature, the sleek and minimalist "alternative work space" is also designed to make you forget you're at work, in a startup environment that is rumored to be aggressively demanding.

"The idea is that we connect them with nature. We get them away from their normal desk environment so you don't see any desks or cubicles around," said Ron Gagliardo, Amazon's leading horticulturist.

The corporate office space, however selfie-worthy, is already such a hit that the company had to create a reservation system to contain the flow of traffic. Employees will have to snag a reservation to get in but it's currently already booked out until April. The building has capacity for about 1,000 people but is more comfortable with about 800.

Once inside, workers can use nooks with tables and chairs that can serve as a casual meeting space. Coffee breaks can be taken in a cafe and "picnic" area offering an interior reprieve from Seattle's unrelenting rainy season.



PHOTOS BY TED S. WARREN/AP

Alex Crook, a photographer with Seattle Magazine, photographs the Amazon Spheres on Monday.



Gathering spaces and a plant-filled wall are visible Monday before a grand opening ceremony for the Amazon Spheres in Seattle. The plant-filled geodesic domes will serve as a work and gathering space for Amazon.com employees.

Amazon eyes health care

By TOM MURPHY
Associated Press

Amazon is diving into health care, teaming up with Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway and the New York bank JPMorgan Chase, to create a company that helps their U.S. employees find quality care "at a reasonable cost."

The business giants offered few details Tuesday and said that the project is in the early planning stage.

"The ballooning costs of (health care) act as a hungry tapeworm on the American economy," Buffett said in a prepared statement. "Our group does not come to this problem with answers. But we also do not accept it as inevitable. Rather, we share the belief that putting our collective resources behind the country's best talent can, in time, check the rise in health costs while concurrently enhancing patient satisfaction and outcomes."

The new company will be independent and "free from profit-making incentives and constraints." The businesses said the new venture's initial focus would be on technology.

The companies did not say whether the project would expand beyond Amazon, Berkshire or JP Morgan. However, JPMorgan Chase Chairman and CEO Jamie Dimon said, "Our goal is to create solutions that benefit our U.S. employees, their families and, potentially, all Americans."

Shares in health care companies took a big hit in early trading Tuesday, suggesting the threat of the new entity to how health care is paid for and delivered in the broader economy.

Any solutions the company devises would find a huge and receptive audience. With about 151 million nonelderly people, employer-sponsored coverage is the largest part of the U.S. health insurance market.

Companies get a tax break for offering health benefits to their workers, and many employers also see them as a critical tool for attracting and keeping workers. But costs are soaring and health care consumes a growing chunk of their budgets. Small businesses have been under particular strain.

Only 50 percent of companies with three to 49 employees offered coverage last year, according to the nonprofit Kaiser Family Foundation. That's down from 66 percent more than a decade ago. The federal Affordable Care Act requires all companies with 50 or more full-time employees to offer it.



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NATION



JESSICA EDELMAN, LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL/AP

Workers prepare to remove the sign from the defunct Lady Luck Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas in October 2011. The sign will be part of the Neon Museum, opening Thursday.

'A romantic image'

Historic Las Vegas neon signs set to shine bright again

By REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

AS FRANK SINATRA asks Lady Luck to stick around, the neon red lights of one of Las Vegas' most famous towering signs appear to dance under the night sky, revealing a beating heart and the rest of the marquee of a famed casino-hotel. Other rusted, dusted and broken neon signs in a large gravel lot ringed by a security wall appear to light up with neon not seen for decades as other classic tunes play in the background.

But these former landmarks of Sin City are missing light bulbs, and some of the remaining are cracked or hang by a wire. They have not been restored and are not plugged into a power outlet. However, augmented reality tests last week made it appear as though many of the city's famed neon signs are burning brightly again.

Forty neon signs that once drew visitors to some of Las Vegas' most iconic casino-hotels and other venues will shine again for the public starting Thursday night at the Neon Museum, but not a single one of their lights will truly be on. The unrestored marquees, worn by the beating sun and twisted by desert winds, are being brought back to life thanks to projection mapping, a type of augmented reality created by projecting lifelike digital animations of the signs onto the hulking metal.

"We are combining art, history and technology in this space," said Neon Museum President and CEO Rob McCoy.

He added: "This is Las Vegas as it was. It is very emotional. Even people who don't live here but live around the United States or around the world, they all have in their heads a romantic image of Las Vegas, and it's usually that vintage, neon Las Vegas."

The signs on display include the Golden Nugget, Lady Luck, Binion's Horseshoe and the first four futuristic-looking letters of the Stardust before the sign at the museum is missing the "dust" part of it.

The 30-minute immersive experience presented after sunset allows visitors to walk freely around the outdoor gallery and get close to the signs. A

soundtrack that includes Elvis Presley's "Night Life," "Mr. Sandman" by The Chordettes and Ella Fitzgerald's "I'm Beginning to See The Light" plays in tandem with each sign that is illuminated.

Neon signs were introduced to the United States at the 1893 World Fair in Chicago. No city embraced the luminous tube lights quite like Las Vegas.

Dozens of those now-retired signs are housed at the museum, but not all remain functional, leaving it up to visitors to imagine what the marquees looked like decades ago. Restoring the signs can cost tens of thousands of dollars each, so using projection mapping is a cheaper process to show what they once looked like lit up.

Digital artist and designer Craig Winslow used photos, drone video and other references to digitally recreate each sign, bulb by bulb. He then used a scanning process to determine the precise placement of eight projectors to ensure the alignment of the content with the bulbs, rusted metal and tubes of the signs.

"There are moments here where there's no bulb, but I've created a digital bulb that is in its place," Winslow said. "From far away, it just looks like the sign is lit. You get up closer, and you realize all the signs are broken or there are missing bulbs or hanging bulbs."

As the Binion's horseshoe flickers in shades of gold and red, Dean Martin croons, "I Love Vegas." Meanwhile, Presley's "Viva Las Vegas" blasts as the set of the Stardust letters shine.

Historical footage of this gambling oasis also will be projected onto the signs, showing Liberace playing the piano and gamblers playing table games.

"Whether they come by car, rail or circle the city and drop in by plane, their eyes pop wide open with their first glimpse of Las Vegas," a historical narration plays right before the signs begin to light up. "A city whose head is wreathed in garlands of neon signs, and a city of storybook west."



Left: Digital artist and designer Craig Winslow looks at his notebook on Jan. 23 at the museum's Lady Luck exhibit. Below: Winslow works on another exhibit.

PHOTOS BY JOHN LOCHER/AP



PHOTOS BY JOE CAVARETTA/AP

Above: Members of the culinary union march in downtown Las Vegas at Binion's Horseshoe Casino in July 2002. Below: On April 1, 2004, workers prepare the stage for a ribbon-cutting ceremony in front of Binion's.



WORLD



CHRIS YOUNG, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

A police officer on Monday investigates outside a house on Mallory Crescent in Toronto where Bruce McArthur did landscape work. McArthur, 66, was killed Jan. 18 in the presumed deaths of Selim Ezen and Andrew Kinsman.

Landscaper in Toronto charged as serial killer

By KYLE SWENSON
The Washington Post

The house on Mallory Crescent was a gray two-story shotgun with brown trim, its garage just a few steps up from the sidewalk.

In the summer months vegetation spilled out from the flower beds running along the driveway, but by the time investigators from the Toronto Police Service marched onto the lot on Jan. 18, the raw Canadian winter had scraped away the landscaping and police turned their attention to large flower planters stored at the back of the property.

They searched there because a self-employed landscaper named Bruce McArthur had worked on the property. That same day, he had been charged with killing two people. Police had reason to believe there might be more.

And they believed they knew where they might find more bodies. McArthur was a self-employed landscaper who stored items at the house where they were searching in return for yard work.

Indeed, inside the planters were hidden the dismembered remains of at least three people.

On Monday, McArthur, 66, was charged with three additional murders. Police believe there are more bodies still.

"It's a serial killer — alleged serial killer," Sgt. Hank Idsinga said at a news conference in Toronto on Monday. "He's taken some steps to cover his tracks and we have to uncover these victims."

The gruesome news in Canada's largest city is unfolding this week against a backdrop of social outrage. Both McArthur and a number of his alleged victims had ties to Toronto's Gay Village neighborhood. For years, members of the city's LGBT community had reported disappearances from the area, sparking whispers about a possible serial killer targeting the community.

According to the timeline pro-

vided by Idsinga at the briefing, beginning in November 2012, Toronto police launched "Project Houston," an investigation into the disappearance of three men from Gay Village, all of Middle Eastern descent: Skandaraj Navaratnam, 40; Abdulbasir Faizi, 42; and Majeed Kayhan, 58. The investigation continued fruitlessly until April 2014.

In August 2017, police started a new investigation — Project Prism — looking for traces of two other missing members of the gay community: Selim Ezen, 44, and Andrew Kinsman, 49.

They learned that Kinsman had had a sexual relationship with McArthur, police say. Investigators began following McArthur. Eventually, police tracked down a maroon Dodge Caravan that they say McArthur had sold to an auto parts store outside of Toronto.

Inside the Dodge, the shop owner claimed, police discovered a trace amount of blood in the vehicle, an assertion so far unconfirmed by authorities.

On Jan. 18, McArthur was arrested and charged with Ezen and Kinsman's murders.

After further investigation and the discovery of remains in the planters, authorities charged McArthur with the murders of three additional murders: Kayhan; Soroush Mahmudi, 50; and Dean Lisowski, 47. Police have not publicly connected the victims to the planters. They said DNA testing was ongoing.

The murder charges are not McArthur's first experience in a criminal courtroom. In October 2001, he was charged with assault with a weapon after attacking a man with a metal pipe, the Toronto Star reported. Although the details of the arrest have not been reported, the paper noted that to avoid jail time the defendant agreed to stay away from Gay Village and keep away from male prostitutes.

McArthur is scheduled to make a plea appearance in court on Feb. 14.

S. Korea: North cancels joint pre-Olympic event

By HYUNG-JIN KIM
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea on Tuesday expressed regret over North Korea's cancellation of one of the joint cooperation projects planned for next month's Winter Olympics, a development highlighting the delicate nature of ties between the rivals split for seven decades.

In a message sent over a cross-border communication channel, South Korea demanded the North to fulfill mutual agreements over a set of conciliatory gestures to mark the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, Seoul's Unification Ministry said.

North Korea on Monday night sent a message saying it won't hold a joint cultural event at the North's Diamond Mountain on Feb. 4, which was one of two pre-Olympic events in North Korea the countries had agreed to. Ministry officials said they expect a joint training session between the countries' non-Olympic skiers at a North Korean ski resort to go on as planned this week.

The ministry cited North Korea as saying it has no other option but to cancel the cultural event because of South Korean media reports that it says defamed its "sincere" measures for the Olympics. The North also accused South Korean media of picking a fight over an unspecified domestic festival in North

Korea, according to the ministry statement.

The North didn't say which media reports were at issue. But some reports had criticized the North's plan to stage a major event to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of its military on Feb. 8, just one day before the Olympics' opening ceremony.

South Korean officials have said the North plans a massive military parade on the anniversary. It's not clear how the latest development would affect other planned Olympics-related cooperation projects between the Koreas. They agreed to field a joint women's hockey team and have their athletes parade together under a single flag during the Feb. 9 opening ceremony. A dozen North Korean hockey players arrived in South Korea last week to practice with their South Korean teammates.

North Korea has a history of last-minute cancellations and unexplained reversals, and some experts say it might have sought to gain concessions from the South. The visit earlier this month of a prominent band leader to inspect artistic venues in the South was delayed by North Korea but eventually took place.

The Koreas' current reconciliation mood followed a year of heightened animosities over North Korea's nuclear program. Many analysts say the North may want to use improved ties with South Korea to weaken U.S.-led international pressure and sanctions on the country.

Hungry Venezuelans 'loot to eat'

By SCOTT SMITH
AND FABIOLA SANCHEZ
Associated Press

PUERTO CABELLO, Venezuela — The cab of Carlos Del Pino's big rig gave him a nerve-rattling front-row seat to a surge in mob attacks on Venezuela's neighborhood markets, cattle ranches and food delivery trucks like his.

Shortly after pulling away from the docks at Puerto Cabello, the country's biggest port, he witnessed 20 people swarm a truck ahead of him and in a frenzy fill up their sacks with the corn it was carrying to a food-processing plant. The driver was held at gunpoint.

"It fills you with terror," Del Pino said.

He has hauled cargo for 14 years and on a good month earns the equivalent of about \$100 enough to support his wife and two daughters. Yet, despite his fears, he sympathizes with his impoverished countrymen, who are becoming desperate amid Venezuela's widespread food shortages and sky-high inflation. "They have to loot to eat," he said.

Sporadic looting, food riots and protests driven by the hungry poor have surged in Venezuela, a country that's no stranger to unrest. But the uprisings playing out recently have a different face than the mostly middle-class protesters who took to the streets for months last year in political demonstrations trying to oust President Nicolas Maduro.

"These protests are coming



FERNANDO LLANO/AP

Men try to steal rice from a cargo truck arriving to the port in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, on Jan. 23.

from people of the lower classes who simply cannot get enough to eat," said David Smilde, a senior fellow at the Washington Office on Latin America who has spent decades researching Venezuela. "They want relief, not necessarily to force Maduro from power."

Venezuela holds the world's largest oil reserves and was once among Latin America's wealthiest nations. But after nearly two decades of socialist rule and mismanagement of the state-run oil company, it is being battered by the worst economic crisis in its history.

The International Monetary Fund estimates inflation will reach five digits this year, while

the economy, in its fifth straight year of recession, will shrink 15 percent.

Financial sanctions imposed in August by the Trump administration are only adding to Venezuelans' misery, choking off the country's access to credit and scaring away oil companies.

Meanwhile, hunger is widespread.

Food and the cash to pay for it are more difficult to find, especially outside the capital of Caracas. And even when people have money, prices are often beyond their reach, with the inflation rate soaring above 2,600 percent in 2017, the opposition-controlled National Assembly said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Couple married 70 years renews vows

MA UXBRIDGE — A Massachusetts couple finally got the church wedding they always wanted, 70 years after first tying the knot. The Telegram & Gazette reported that Edward Gouin, 90, and Lena Gouin, 89, renewed their vows Saturday at the Roman Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd in Uxbridge thanks to some careful planning by their family.

Because Edward is Catholic and Lena is Congregationalist, a wedding in a church was barred when they were first married. Instead, they were wed in a church rectory.

"Today, it can happen," said Edward, a World War II veteran.

Boy survives after tip of screw lodges in skull

MD SALISBURY — A Maryland seventh-grader survived after the tip of a 6-inch-long metal screw got lodged in his skull.

The Daily Times of Salisbury reported Darius Foreman was building a treehouse at his aunt's house when he fell from a branch. A wooden plank with a screw sticking out of it slammed onto his head.

Two cousins ran for help. Foreman's mother found him wandering around the yard with a board stuck to his head, the screw penetrating his skull.

Foreman required neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He was released from the hospital on Jan. 25, his 13th birthday.

Deputy politely asks runaway horse to stop

FL HUDSON — A Florida deputy was caught on video politely pursuing a four-legged suspect on a busy road.

Pasco County Sheriff's Cpl. Art Madden last week spotted a chestnut-and-white horse galloping in and out of traffic on a road north of Tampa. Rolling down his law enforcement vehicle's window, he asked the animal to "please stop." He also made kissy noises, to no avail.

According to authorities, he was able to herd the animal into a nearby housing development, and the mare finally came to a stop. Madden exited his cruiser and approached, only to have her run off again.

The horse eventually stopped a second time, and Madden threw his arms around her neck. The horse's owner, who had reported the animal missing, arrived and took it away unharmed.

Official: Fire caused by man trying to thaw pipe

ME BANGOR — Fire officials in Maine said a tenant attempting to thaw a frozen pipe with an open flame caused a house fire.

Fire crews were called to the nearby Bangor early Saturday to find the house full of heavy smoke. Bangor Assistant Fire Chief Matt



WILFREDO LEE/AP

Flying high

A hydrofoil kiteboarder catches some air in the Atlantic Ocean off Crandon Park in Key Biscayne, Fla., on Sunday.

Costello told WABI-TV that one of the tenants in the building was attempting to thaw out a frozen pipe with an open flame and set fire to the basement.

Costello said crews were delayed because the tenant did not immediately call 911, instead attempting to extinguish the fire himself.

Plane makes emergency landing on freeway

CA COSTA MESA — The pilot of a small plane that made a nighttime emergency landing on a Southern California freeway said that as soon as the engine died he knew he'd never

make it to a nearby airport.

"I saw an opening on the highway and I went for it right away," Israel Slod said after safely guiding the single-engine Beech G33 onto State Route 55 in Costa Mesa on Sunday night.

Fire Capt. Chris Coates said it was a "complete miracle" that traffic was light and the plane didn't hit any cars or cause a collision. No injuries were reported.

Zoo staff searching for missing Pallas' cat

UT SALT LAKE CITY — A Salt Lake City zoo is searching for a 10-month-old Pallas' cat that went missing from

his outdoor exhibit.

Hogle Zoo officials said the young Pallas' cat named Mushu is smaller than most domestic cats and is not dangerous.

Staff discovered he was missing Sunday morning. They believe he is still within the zoo grounds.

According to a statement from the zoo, Pallas' cats are "extremely elusive" and tend to be difficult to spot.

Staff members have laid out live box traps, and searchers are using a thermal imaging camera that detects heat to locate Mushu.

Hogle Zoo spokeswoman Erica Hansen said it's important that they find him because Pallas' cats are a threatened species.

THE CENSUS



14.5 The length in inches of a centipede that Clayton Cambra

caught with a bucket in his backyard in Hilo, Hawaii. The retired taxidermist said the venomous arthropod stood up in the bucket "like a cobra," escaping multiple times before he was able to put it in a plastic bag and then in his freezer. After the centipede died, Cambra said he injected it with formaldehyde to be preserved. It is on display at his home on the Big Island.

Police investigate theft of 4K antique lighters

TX AMARILLO — Amarillo police are investigating a burglary in which thieves lifted about 4,000 antique lighters.

An Amarillo police statement said officers responded to a burglary at a house on Jan. 18. Investigators said the owner reported the theft of his flint butane lighter collection.

Cpl. Jeb Hilton said that no one has been arrested in the theft of what the officer called a "valuable" and "very expensive" collection. Hilton declined to say how much the lighters are worth amid the investigation.

Puerto Rican man runs backward in race

FL MIAMI — A Puerto Rican man ran the Miami Half-Marathon backward to draw attention to the plight of Puerto Rico, which is struggling to recover after Hurricane Maria.

WFLG Local 10 reported that Jorge Cruz, 34, finished the 13.1-mile route in 1 hour, 47 minutes and 12 seconds Sunday. Out of the more than 14,000 runners competing in the half-marathon, Cruz placed 1,361st.

Cruz, who ran the 5K race Saturday with his girlfriend, is hoping to set a Guinness World Record.

Clock ticking for winning lottery ticket holders

MD BALTIMORE — Maryland Lottery officials said the clock is ticking for three Powerball players to claim their \$50,000 prizes.

Officials said winning tickets from drawings on Aug. 5, Aug. 12 and Aug. 19 of last year have yet to be claimed.

Players have 182 days from the day of the drawing to claim their prizes, meaning the winning tickets will all expire by mid-February.

The tickets were sold at Glen Burnie Mobil in Glen Burnie, a Wegman's grocery store in Frederick and a Giant grocery store in Catonsville.

From wire reports

FACES

Grammys clearly have no interest in fixing show's rap problem

By CHRIS RICHARDS
The Washington Post

Jay-Z strolled into the 60th Grammy Awards in his native New York on Sunday night with the most nominations. When the whole thing was finally over, he trudged back home with zero, having been blanked in all eight categories in which he was nominated, including album of the year, a prize that has only ever been gifted to a rap artist once — ever — and it wasn't Jay-Z, not then, and not now.

Truth was, the legends's "4:44" wasn't the strongest contender on this year's slate. That would have been "DAMN," by Kendrick Lamar, a vivid, alert, voice-of-his-generation-level rapper

who also lost album of the year — on his third consecutive try — to the antisepic anti-funk of Bruno Mars. Why? And how? And what? I guess Grammy voters remember young Bruno doing a neat job at his Super Bowl halftime gig back in 2014, or maybe they just liked hearing "24K Magic" at all of those wedding receptions last summer.

And so it remains impossible to figure out what exactly motivates the voting members of today's Recording Academy — other than a deep, abiding distaste for rap music, the dominant style of American pop for the past two decades. OutKast won album of the year for "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below" in 2004, and since then, the industry has bestowed its highest honor on artists peddling neo-soul, neo-folk, neo-disco, and now, neo-funk.

The past 14 years have made it excruciatingly clear that the Grammys want as little to do with rap music as possible. So why do rappers still want anything to do with the Grammys? Jay-Z boycot-



MATT SAYLES, INVISION/AP

Kendrick Lamar, center, opened Sunday's Grammy Awards with an intense medley centered on his "XXX" track.

ted the awards for a few years, but has since come around, presumably hoping that his peers in the industry might one day be ready to recognize his contribution to the American songbook. Not this year.

As for Lamar, I hope you enjoyed what should be his last Grammy telecast performance on Sunday night. Let's not forget all of the flaming hoops that the Recording Academy has asked this young auteur to jump through. Remember at the 2014 Grammys when Lamar, already a singular voice in pop, was forced into a mashed-up duet with the low-imagination rock band Imagine Dragons? Having paid his dues a few times over, Lamar kick-started Sunday night's ceremony pretty much by himself.

But by the end of the night, that energy had evaporated. Lamar was good enough to open the show, but not good enough to stand in the winner's circle. It might have given you the funny feeling that the Recording Academy doesn't see its big rap problem as any kind of problem at all.

Winslet confesses 'bitter regrets' in speech

Kate Winslet has finally admitted she regrets working with Woody Allen — sort of.

The actress has stayed noticeably tight-lipped as many of the famed director's stars have come out against him in the shadow of a resurfaced sexual assault accusation.

Winslet, who starred in Allen's most recent film, "Wonder Wheel," broke her silence Sunday in her acceptance speech at the London Critics' Circle film awards, telling the crowd she has "bitter regrets" over working with unnamed Hollywood folk.

"As women around the world and from all walks of life marched last weekend, I realized that I wouldn't be able to stand here this evening and keep to myself some bitter regrets that I have about poor decisions to work with individuals with whom I wish I had not," she said.



Winslet

and moviegoers alike."

The British star's veiled dig at Allen comes as many of the director's stars have denounced his behavior, vowed never to work with him again and, in some cases, donated their entire salaries.

Allen has never been convicted of a crime, and has repeatedly denied adopted daughter Dylan Farrow's claims of sexual assault.

From New York Daily News



Tom Hanks

GRANT POLLARD, INVISION/AP

A beautiful day: Tom Hanks to play Mr. Rogers in biopic

By ELAHE IZADI
The Washington Post

One of the country's most likable actors (Tom Hanks) will portray one of the country's most likable entertainers ever (Fred Rogers, aka Mister Rogers) in an upcoming feature film.

In "You Are My Friend," based on the friendship that developed between Rogers and journalist Tom Junod, "a cynical journalist begrudgingly accepts an assignment to write a profile piece on the beloved icon and finds his perspective on life transformed," according to Variety.

Hanks has played real-life figures before, such as Charlie Wilson in "Charlie Wilson's War," Jim Lovell in "Apollo 13" and, most recently, Wash-

ington Post editor Ben Bradlee in "The Post."

While Hanks' career has run the gamut from slapstick fellas to tortured souls, perhaps his most defining attribute is his "America's Dad" persona. That's an asset to an actor who's signed up to depict Mister Rogers, a larger-than-life figure beloved by generations of children who also changed countless lives by his example of generosity and unconditional love.

"The really cool thing about Tom Hanks playing Fred is that Fred and Tom Hanks are similar in a really essential way in that they are gentle people, they are soft-spoken people, but they are powerful people," Junod told Esquire. "I think that Tom Hanks can really bring that aspect of Fred out."

Production is set to begin in September.

Recording Academy head rethinks comments

From wire services

Recording Academy President Neil Portnow says his comments following the 60th annual Grammy Awards were taken out of context after he was criticized for saying women in the music industry need to "step up."

In a statement Tuesday to The Associated Press, Portnow says he regretfully used the words "step up" and that the words were taken out of context and neither convey his beliefs nor the point he was trying to make. The show ended Sunday with only two female winners onstage. Lorde, the only woman nominated for album of the year, didn't perform.

He says the music industry must recognize that female musicians "face barriers that men have never faced."

Other news

■ Actress Meryl Streep filed an application to trademark "Meryl Streep" last week, according to documents obtained by the Daily News. The trademark would give Streep, 68, the exclusive rights to use her name for entertainment services, which include personal appearances, autograph signings and "live, televised, and movie appearances."

■ Omarosa Manigault Newman is following up her year in the White House with a stint on "Celebrity Big Brother." CBS unveiled the cast of the reality show's upcoming season Sunday with a commercial that aired during the Grammy Awards. Besides Manigault Newman, other contestants include basketball star Metta World Peace and actresses Marissa Jaret Winokur and Keshia Knight Pulliam.

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OPINION

Where in the world is our military?

By REP. JEFF FORTENBERRY
Special to Stars and Stripes

Our nation recently suffered a severe, heart-wrenching tragedy in the heart of Africa. Four young American troops were killed in an ambush attack, and several others were wounded. I recently met with one of the wounded warriors of the Special Forces team caught in that Niger firefight. He was fortunate to return home, and I was privileged to speak with him. As he told me about his military experience, I could not help but be inspired by his dedication, pride and firm belief in the United States' mission to deter war and protect the security of our nation.

If asked, most of us tend to think of U.S. troops abroad as primarily engaged in Afghanistan and Iraq, with certain traditional forward bases in South Korea, Japan and Germany. In reality, American soldiers are positioned all over the world — from Thailand to Burkina Faso, Honduras to the Philippines, Kosovo to Singapore — committed to a vast number of operations in often far-flung and unknown outposts. Dedicated men and women serve on and in the air and hundreds of feet below the surface of the sea in submarines.

The pain of any harm inflicted on our soldiers, like the soldier I met from Niger, calls us to better understand the extent and nature of how our armed forces serve across the globe. Per the Pentagon's Base Structure Report and other sources, our soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen are serving in 182 of the world's 195 countries, on over 800 military bases, at various radar facilities and in small cooperative security locations (or "hilly pads"), both confirmed and unconfirmed. The U.S. Army alone has 111,000 soldiers serving in 134 nations. Our Navy has 47,000 sailors deployed to every ocean and 98 countries, while 41,000 Marines serve at sea and ashore in 120



Soldiers salute at a U.S. Army Europe assumption-of-command ceremony in Wiesbaden, Germany, on Jan. 18. Per the Pentagon's Base Structure Report and other sources, our troops are serving in 182 of the world's 195 countries.

MICHAEL ABRAMS
Stars and Stripes

countries. The U.S. Air Force has 79,000 personnel in 133 countries. And our National Guard and reserves contribute an additional 42,000 citizen soldiers from almost every community in America. Stories of sacrifice occur 365 days a year.

Reasonable questions arise about the size, necessity and cost of such an extensive military footprint. In Washington, movements of political elites have long sought to use our military to further realize certain views about expanding economic domain and projecting power. Others believe isolationism to be the right response. Both perspectives are incomplete and potentially dangerous.

The proper model of engagement requires strong defense capacity, smart leadership and a disposition to authentic friendship. America should not be the world's policeman, and indeed few want America to be the world's policeman. Yet immense security and stabilization problems around the world compel us to engage, sometimes forcefully. A new way forward in foreign affairs, which I call foreign policy realism, combines military, diplomatic

and economic regeneration in partnership with willing nations that are positioning to develop their own capacity for sustaining their own security and well-being.

Our military's supporting work abroad can create the conditions for the continued flourishing of societies, and that is the basis for security. The world needs us — it's a heavy reality. We just ask: Don't bite the hand of friendship.

In one potent example, a Yazidi man from northern Iraq lamented, "My people can't go home." He went on to say, "If just one American soldier were there to help us, we would have hope for a safe return."

For all the stresses at home, and the sometimes fickle embrace of our nation abroad, it is still an undeniable fact: For those facing annihilation, deprivation, starvation or the destruction of a society, the arrival of the American soldier is often the most welcome sight in the world. What a world of difference one American soldier can make.

Jeff Fortenberry, a Republican, represents Nebraska's 1st Congressional District in the House of Representatives.

Encourage GIs' spiritual fitness, not censorship

By MIKE BERRY
Special to Stars and Stripes

While the Department of Defense defends our nation against threats to national security, two groups are hoping Defense Secretary Jim Mattis will take his attention off the enemy and turn it against the spiritual needs of our servicemembers.

In a joint letter to Mattis, the Freedom From Religion Foundation and the American Atheists demand that the DOD put an end to several time-honored military traditions. Among their complaints, these groups demand an end to the longstanding practice of allowing invocations at military graduation ceremonies, or requiring recruits who choose not to participate in religious programs to perform other military duties.

These demands are not only legally wrong, they're dangerous.

To read their claims, one would assume that, for those who identify as atheist or nonreligious, religious coercion is on the rise. But upon closer examination, it turns out that neither organization cites a single incident to support their claims of religious coercion. Not one.

Instead, there are vague references to events that support their thesis, but to jury down to the details, there's no actual proof. No lawsuits, no court decisions; only suggestions that conveniently align with their organizational mission.

But perhaps worse than mere unsupported claims, the letter goes on to make a

number of incorrect legal assertions.

First, the letter claims that by permitting military chaplains to offer invocations at military graduation ceremonies, the government violates the much-maligned "Lemon test." But, the practice of invocations at government meetings or events is hardly a novel concept. In fact, it predates the Constitution itself. And, the Supreme Court has repeatedly and recently upheld invocations by government employees and private citizens as consistent with the history and tradition of our country and the Constitution.

In fact, currently pending before the U.S. Supreme Court is *Lund v. Rowan County*, in which the court may decide whether an elected official may deliver an invocation. Meanwhile, invocation practices that are part of this nation's history and tradition continue to be constitutional.

Knowing this, the authors of the letter claim that the very existence of military chaplains "[is] legally justifiable only as a means of accommodating the free exercise rights of military members." In other words, these organizations believe military chaplains should not exist, but that there is a legal justification for them so we have to reluctantly give them a pass.

Surely they must know that a federal appeals court famously declared that the military chaplaincy is not something we must merely tolerate as legally justifiable, but that the Constitution actually obligates Congress to provide for the free exercise of religion in the military by means of the

chaplaincy.

Military chaplains are the fulfillment of our nation's constitutional obligation to our servicemembers.

Were the DOD to give in to the groups' demands, the harm our military would suffer would be catastrophic. Religious freedom in the military is not a luxury; it is every bit a necessity as bullets, beans and bandages. Religious freedom is a force multiplier that enables all troops — regardless of their faith, or no faith — to prepare themselves for what may be required of them in military service.

The taking of a life — or indeed, the ultimate sacrifice of one's own life — while in service to this nation requires physical, mental and spiritual fitness. One as a post-World War II spiritual presence. President Harry S. Truman on the importance of religion in the military stated, "[If] we expect our Armed Forces to be physically prepared, we must also expect them to be ideologically prepared." Military chaplains are essential to that preparation.

Indeed, few in this administration understand this more than the man to whom this misguided letter is addressed, Mattis. Here's hoping he refuses to take the bait, disregards their false and dangerous demands and keeps his attention on America's enemies. Our servicemembers make many sacrifices in defense of our nation. Religious liberty should never be one of them.

Mike Berry is deputy general counsel and director of Military Affairs at FirstLiberty.org, and a former active-duty U.S. Marine officer.

OPINION

GOP aims to stop a Democratic wave in Pa.

BY ALBERT R. HUNT
Bloomberg View

Canonsburg, Pa., whose population peaked about the time native son Perry Como left in the 1930s, is Trump country. A special congressional election there in six weeks makes it a pretty good place to test whether President Donald Trump's standing is eroding.

The area's Republican congressman, Tim Murphy, represented the 18th Congressional District in southwestern Pennsylvania for 14 years until he resigned in scandal last October. Mostly rural, with small towns and a slice of Pittsburgh suburbs, it should be a slam dunk for Republicans. Trump carried it by 19 percentage points and Murphy ran unopposed in the last two elections. But Democrats, sensing a national blue wave, think they have a shot.

There are interesting crosscurrents. The 33-year-old Democratic candidate, Conor Lamb, a former federal prosecutor and Marine Corps veteran with family roots in the area, is youthful and polished on the stump. The Republican, state Rep. Rick Saccone, a 59-year-old former Air Force officer with a doctorate in international affairs, counters with legislative experience and proven success with voters.

There's enthusiasm for the attractive young Democrat, while Republicans have an embedded political infrastructure. Both sides agree that Trump would carry the district in an election held today, and also that his support has slipped since November.

They also agree that local voters hate Washington, which can sometimes make the race so close that it's a contest between House Speaker Paul Ryan and House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi. The federal tax overhaul enacted in December will be a focus of debate in the final month before the March 13 balloting. Saccone, who says he's going to Washing-



State Rep. Rick Saccone, above, a former Air Force officer, is the Republican nominee for Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District. His Democratic opponent is Marine Corps veteran Conor Lamb. President Donald Trump carried the district in 2016.

ton to help Trump, is a big booster. Lamb, who says he's going to Washington to bring change and work across the aisle, argues that the tax cut won't help working-class Pennsylvanians and that it presages cuts in Medicare and Social Security. There are a lot of seniors in the district.

Looming over the contest is last week's Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling that the state's congressional districts are illegally gerrymandered to favor Republicans and must be redrawn. This won't affect the March contest, but could lead to a November rerun with different district lines.

National Republicans fear the shock waves that will strike if they lose a district that wasn't even on the radar screen four months ago, when the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported that Murphy, a self-pro-

claimed family values conservative, had urged his lover to have an abortion. He soon resigned.

GOP manpower and money are pouring in to attack Lamb, portraying him as a left-wing Pelosi lackey. Fake photographs are circulating, purporting to show them together. (Lamb has said he would not support her for party leader, saying he'd favor a new leadership generation personified by Reps. Tim Ryan, of neighboring Ohio, and Joe Kennedy, of Massachusetts.) Both Trump and Vice President Mike Pence have said they'd visit to stump for Saccone. They know it's a race they can ill afford to lose.

Saccone, whose campaign website says he spent a year "on a diplomatic mission" in North Korea, is one of the state

legislature's most conservative members, once backing a bill requiring public school buildings to post signs declaring "In God We Trust." The district is culturally conservative, but its voters also include more than 80,000 union households and labor is energized for 19.

In Canonsburg, Trump signs and bumper stickers are still common sights. At the Perry Como museum inside a McDonald's restaurant last week, Donna McDonald, who voted Republican in 2016, is undecided now and disappointed in Trump. "He's a double talker," she said. A couple of other residents who opened their doors to talk politics fretted about the president's tweets.

Lamb focuses his fire on congressional Republicans, but doesn't lay off Trump.

"I'll work with Trump on infrastructure and drugs, but not the sort of tax bill that gives crumbs to the middle class and does nothing to protect jobs from going overseas," he said in an interview.

While Saccone cites his political experience, Lamb, relishing the contrast, says he is part of a new outsider breed. Some liberals in the suburban part of the district complain that he is too centrist, pro-gun and Trump-tolerant. But even Republican strategists acknowledge that anti-Trump passions will drive those voters to Lamb.

Helped by his family's political roots, Lamb is out-fundraising his opponent. National Democratic groups are starting to invest, but so far have delivered only a fraction of the outside Republican contest. That may not be enough, said professor Terry Madonna, of Franklin & Marshall College, a leading expert on Pennsylvania politics.

"This race may be winnable for Democrats," Madonna said, "but they don't have much time."

Albert R. Hunt is a Bloomberg View columnist. He was the executive editor of Bloomberg News, before which he was a reporter, bureau chief and executive Washington editor at the Wall Street Journal.

Social media platforms want you to buy followers

BY LEONID BERSHIDSKY
Bloomberg View

A New York Times story about a company, Devumi, that has sold more than 200 million fake followers to second-tier celebrities and "influencers," has made a big splash. New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said his office has opened an investigation into Devumi's "impersonation and deception." But the firm is just a tiny outfit with an office above a Mexican restaurant in West Palm Beach, Fla. What really needs to be investigated is to what extent social networks' user bases are fake and what benefits the giant companies that own them — Facebook, Google, Twitter — draw from the widespread fakery.

While The New York Times did a stellar job investigating Devumi, the Florida firm doesn't appear to be a particularly sophisticated player in the large market for social media fraud. It acquired Twitter bots wholesale from shadowy operations like Peakker, Cheap Panel and YBot and then retailed them with a huge markup to people too lazy to source the bots on their own.

The market, meanwhile, is large, diverse and often bizarre. Marketplaces exist for Facebook likes and fake reviews — the University of Iowa's Shehroze Farooqi and collaborators explored a big one, SEO-Clerks.com, in an April 2017 paper. People create internet-of-things botnets that use

routers and smart TVs infected with malware to register and exploit fake social network accounts. Canadian cybersecurity researcher Masarah Paquet-Clouston and collaborators documented the activity of such a botnet, Linux/Moose, in a July 2017 paper.

In April 2017, Juan Echeverria and Shi Zhou at University College London described a network of more than 350,000 Twitter bots that only tweeted quotes from novels based on "Star Wars" movies. The low-profile bots helped blot follower counts for years. Even singer Lady Gaga counted 14,315 of the "Star Wars" bots among her more than 70 million followers. How much of the rest of that huge audience is fake? It would take dozens of investigations to find out.

The Devumi story focuses on Twitter, the easiest network to exploit because of its purposely lax identification policies. Twitter followers are the cheapest on the black market. Devumi, which according to the Times charged \$17 per 1,000 followers, was more expensive than most of the competition.

YouTube subscribers command the highest prices because, thanks to the way YouTube shares ad revenue with content creators, they are potentially the most lucrative.

The most difficult part of launching a social media bot is registering a fake account. On some networks, a bot must cheat

Captcha robot detection. Others require a working phone number, a feature bypassed though the use of voice-over internet telephony. The registration barriers are never high enough that it would become prohibitively expensive for the bot farms to jump over them. Paquet-Clouston and collaborators pointed out that to register accounts on Instagram, the Linux/Moose botnet simply generated email addresses like "Groe***elwub nhwt@wzgvf.org" on the fly. Instagram didn't even check them by sending an email with a confirmation link.

After failing to set serious entry barriers, the networks make a show of diligently detecting and suspending the bots. But some — like the "Star Wars" botnet, set up as long ago as 2013 — avoid detection because their creators know how the algorithms work. Others are disposable; they're just needed to spread some spam or help a political campaign. It's easy enough to produce more as needed.

Why are the account registration policies of the social media networks more lax than the entry policies of your standard U.S. nightclub? The usual argument is that they make it easier for dissidents living under oppressive regimes or for whistleblowers to make their voices heard. That explanation is harder to buy than a million Twitter followers, though. Oppressive regimes tend to ban U.S.-based social media and, if they don't, develop detection mechanisms that work far better than the net-

works' algorithms meant to weed out fakes. As a dissident or whistleblower, one would be extremely unwise to set up a public social media account, anonymous or not.

Another question is why the social platforms make users' follower and subscriber numbers, as well as the numbers of likes and shares, so easily available. Taking them out of public access would remove the temptation to inflate them by paying for robotic "mercenaries" and it wouldn't detract from the content. Why turn one's life on the internet into a public competition? It should be enough for all practical purposes to release the audience numbers to the user and perhaps to advertisers, but not to the entire world.

It would be easy to stop fraud if the platforms really wanted to. How long will it take for someone like Schneiderman to stop messing around with the likes of Devumi — a fleck of dust on the tip of the iceberg — and start digging into the social platforms' business models? It's not right that the only estimates of the number of fake accounts come from the platforms themselves. Nor is it right for these companies' stock valuations and ability to attract advertisers to be based on their own, unaudited user numbers. Far authorities have allowed this; in doing so they have let the enormous fraud market develop.

Leonid Bershidsky is a Bloomberg View columnist. He was the founding editor of the Russian business daily Vedomosti and founded the opinion website Slon.ru.

Frazz



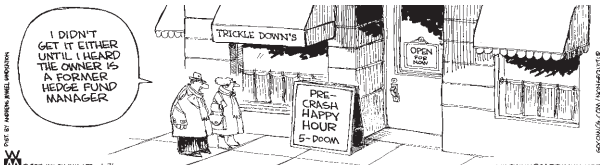
Dilbert



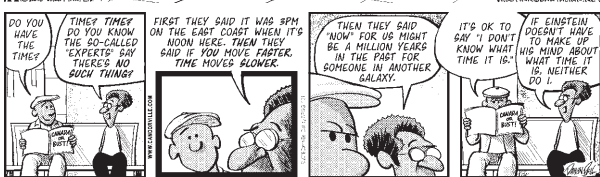
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



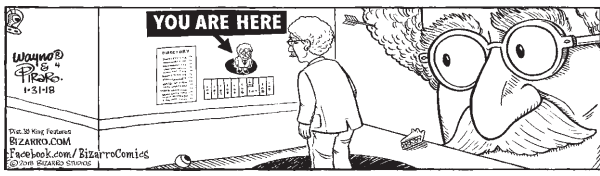
Carpe Diem



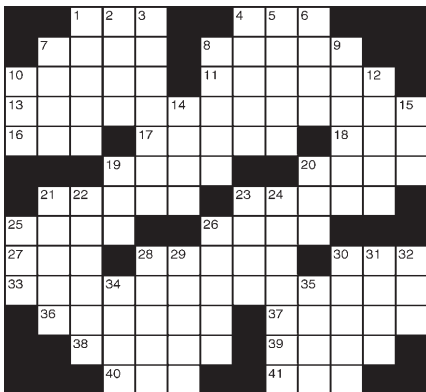
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Ump
- 4 Actor Gibson
- 7 Mani counterpart
- 8 Man's man
- 10 Leafy Lunch
- 11 Being exhibited
- 13 Tony Blair was one
- 16 Still
- 17 "Star Wars" director
- 18 Genetic letters
- 19 Biography
- 20 Datum
- 21 Parody
- 23 Big hit
- 25 Lure
- 26 Ticket half
- 27 Lab eggs
- 28 Franciscan's farewell
- 30 Mermaid's home
- 33 "Rubber baby buggy bumpers," for one
- 36 Band aide
- 37 Texas cookoff dish
- 38 Narrow cuts
- 39 Melodies

DOWN

- 40 Pigs' digs
- 41 Vinyl records
- 19 Parcel of land
- 20 "Terrific"
- 21 Relish
- 22 Baby grands, e.g.
- 23 Pack cargo
- 24 "Hamilton" only opera
- 25 Automaton, for short
- 26 Locations
- 27 Rid of rind
- 28 Taxpayer's dread
- 29 God
- 30 Mixes up
- 31 Morays
- 32 "Entourage" role
- 34 Guys' dates
- 35 Model in a bottle

Answer to Previous Puzzle



1-31

CRYPTOQUIP

SKZD MTVOJ FHOO AH SKH
FTNOJ'D XNHPSHDS FZEH
DSTNPXH NTTR. ZS'D SKH

EVRAHN-TEH AHDS MHOOPN.
Yesterday's Cryptquip: YOU'RE CLAIMING YOU STILL DIDN'T GET THAT NOTE THE SECOND TIME I MAILED IT? I RE-SENT THAT!

Today's Cryptquip Clue: O equals L

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- Stars and Stripes reserves the right to re-classify, rewrite and reject any ads.

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Circulation	Van Rowell rowell.van@stripes.com +49(0)631.3615-9111 DSN 314.583.9111	Robert Reismann reismann.robert@stripes.com +49(0)631.3615-9150 DSN 314.583.9150	Mari Matsumoto sspcirculation@stripes.com +81(3) 6385.3171 DSN 315.229.3171
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Announcements 040

SCAM FADS

Classifieds scams can target both sellers and buyers with classifieds advertisements.

Be aware of the common red flags.

Some of the latest scam fads are:

- Vehicle buyers wanting to buy sight unseen and have the vehicle shipped through an agent using paypal.
- People saying Free Dog (different breeds) for adoption.

Automotive 140

SELLER BEWARE

Individuals placing classified advertising should use discretion in concluding the sale of their property. Not all potential buyers are reputable or honest. Stars and Stripes suggests that you take precautions to ensure that potential buyers are reputable and will be able to fulfill the terms of the sale. Stars and Stripes is not liable for the contractual relationship between sellers and buyers of merchandise advertised in the newspaper or on the web site.

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Auto - Quality Pre-owned US SPEC Vehicles
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Travel 1000

Winter in Garmisch
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39eur PP. DBL occp. free brkfst.
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VIETNAM

AT

50

Explore **STARS AND STRIPES**® new feature section: Vietnam at 50.

With contributions from the men and women who were there, as well as voices from experts and our readers, we take a look back at the Vietnam War and the cultural changes that surrounded it. How the war was prosecuted, how it changed our military and foreign policy thinking, and how America viewed itself then and now. It's a radically new design for Stars and Stripes, and one you can help shape by sharing your thoughts and voices.

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NBA

Pistons acquire Griffin

Clippers continue makeover with trade of All-Star

By NOAH TRISTER

Associated Press

The Detroit Pistons shook up their struggling roster in dramatic fashion, acquiring star forward Blake Griffin in a trade with the Los Angeles Clippers.

The Pistons announced the deal early Tuesday morning. Detroit sent forward Tobias Harris, guard Avery Bradley and center Boban Marjanovic to Los Angeles, with the Clippers also receiving draft picks. Detroit also acquired forward Brice Johnson and center Willie Reed in the deal.

"We are serious about winning, and this is a major move to improve our team," Pistons owner Tom Gores said in a statement. "Blake Griffin is one of the NBA's elite players, and when you get an opportunity to add that kind of talent, you take it."

Griffin is averaging 22.6 points, 7.9 rebounds and 5.4 assists in 33 games this season, but the Clippers have been plagued by injuries and are ninth in the Western Conference standings.

Detroit is scuffling as well. The Pistons have lost eight straight heading into Tuesday night's game against Cleveland.

The 28-year-old Griffin has been the face of the Clippers, and last July, he agreed to a \$171-million, five-year deal, ending a brief flirtation with free agency. He told his teammates, coach Doc Rivers and owner Steve Ballmer, "I want my legacy to be a Clipper."

The deal didn't include a no-trade clause.

The addition of Griffin gives Detroit's frontcourt another star alongside Andre Drummond, but it also represents a clear change in course from the roster the Pistons had assembled. Detroit acquired Bradley in a trade with Boston last offseason, but he's in the final season of his contract. Harris has been impressive for the Pistons this season, shooting a career-best 41 percent from three-point range.

"The move is not without risk. We gave up a lot to get him, including Tobias Harris — one of the hardest-working, highest-character players I know — and two high-quality young men in Avery Bradley and Boban Marjanovic," Gores said. "But we were very excited to bring Blake Griffin to Detroit. He is a great fit for our team and will bring a combination of toughness and athleticism that will elevate our team and excite our fans."

Detroit's season was looking promising until a late-December injury to point guard Reggie Jackson. The Pistons have stumbled while he's been out with a sprained right ankle, and the team is facing the prospect of missing the playoffs in its first season at its new downtown arena.

Detroit's next six games are at home, so the Pistons will have a



BRANDON DILL/AP

Clippers forward Blake Griffin shoots against the Grizzlies last week in Memphis, Tenn. Los Angeles traded the face of their franchise to the Detroit Pistons for players and draft picks on Monday.

‘Blake Griffin is one of the NBA's elite players, and when you get an opportunity to add that kind of talent, you take it.’

Tom Gores

Pistons owner

chance to turn this season around — and an opportunity to build for a future with both Griffin and Drummond.

"His presence will help us offensively and his size gives us another rebounder and weapon in the paint," said Stan Van Gundy, Detroit's coach and team president. "Willie Reed and Brice Johnson are two young players that give us size and depth."

For the Clippers, moving Griffin continues a makeover of a franchise that has never made it past the second round of the playoffs.

The Clippers traded All-Star point guard Chris Paul to Houston last summer. He had been credited with bringing respectability to the team that was once the laughingstock of the league. Without Paul, Los Angeles won its first four games to open the season, and then lost nine of its next 11. The team was one game above .500 going into Tuesday night's game against Portland. Paul's replacement, Patrick

Beverly, has missed the entire season after right knee surgery. Also missing time have been DeAndre Jordan, Danilo Gallinari, Austin Rivers and Miles Teodisic.

Los Angeles receives a protected first-round draft choice and a second-round pick from the Pistons.

The Clippers drafted Griffin first overall out of Oklahoma in 2009. As a rookie, he was an All-Star, won the slam dunk contest and was named NBA Rookie of the Year.

He has averaged 21.6 points, 9.3 rebounds and 4.2 assists in his career.

Even before the Pistons announced the deal, there was plenty of reaction on social media. Monday night, Harris had a message on his accounts thanking Detroit for its support. Griffin's Twitter account had its own message with no words — just an image of actor Will Smith with a surprised expression on his face.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct
Boston	33	15	68.8
Toronto	33	15	68.8
Philadelphia	28	20	58.3
New York	22	26	44.9
Brooklyn	15	33	30.0

Southeast Division			
	W	L	Pct
Miami	29	21	58.0
Washington	27	23	54.2
Charlotte	20	29	40.8
Atlanta	15	30	33.3
Orlando	14	34	29.2

Central Division			
	W	L	Pct
Cleveland	19	30	38.7
Milwaukee	27	22	55.1
Portland	28	23	54.9
Detroit	22	26	45.8
Chicago	18	32	36.0

Western Conference

Southwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Houston	35	13	72.9
San Antonio	33	19	63.5
New Orleans	27	22	55.1
Memphis	18	27	39.7
Dallas	16	34	32.0

Northwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
Minnesota	32	21	60.4
Oklahoma City	30	20	60.0
Portland	27	22	55.1
Denver	26	24	52.0
Utah	21	28	42.9

Pacific Division			
	W	L	Pct
Golden State	40	8	80.0
L.A. Clippers	25	23	52.0
L.A. Lakers	19	30	38.8
Phoenix	14	33	29.7
Sacramento	15	36	29.4

Sunday's games			
Houston 113, Phoenix 102			
Milwaukee 110, Chicago 96			
L.A. Clippers 112, New Orleans 103			
Cleveland 122, Philadelphia 112			
Toronto 123, L.A. Lakers 111			
Oklahoma City 113, Sacramento 98			

Monday's games			
Atlanta 105, Charlotte 96			
Atlanta 105, Minnesota 100			
Memphis 120, Phoenix 109			
Memphis 107, Philadelphia 95			
Miami 95, Dallas 88			
Boston 111, Denver 110			

Tuesday's games			
Oklahoma City at Washington			
Brooklyn at New York			
Minnesota at Toronto			
Cleveland at Detroit			
Orlando at Houston			
Sacramento at New Orleans			
Denver at San Antonio			
Golden State at Utah			
Atlanta 130, Dallas 122			

Wednesday's games			
L.A. Lakers at Orlando			
Memphis at Indiana			
Portland at L.A. Clippers			
Miami at Cleveland			
Phoenix at Brooklyn			
New York at Boston			
Chicago at Portland			
Dallas at Phoenix			

Thursday's games			
Toronto at Washington			
San Antonio at Memphis			
Milwaukee at Minnesota			
Oklahoma City at Denver			

Friday's games			
Celtics 111, Nuggets 110			

Saturday's games			
Boston — Tatum 8-13 2-20, Horford 4-12 0-10, Baynes 3-10 0-6, Irving 13-27, Brown 4-11 0-9, Ojeleye 2-3 0-6, Thibault 4-9 0-13, M.L. Morris 4-15 1-4, Rozier 3-8 0-8, Totals 43-91 8-10-11.			
Denver — Barton 8-18 1-19, Jokic 8-17 2-24, Plumlee 1-10 2-16, Murray 5-11 3-14, Harris 6-16 2-15, Fariel 0-3 0-0, Craig 0-1 0-20, Mullins 1-7 0-2, Craig 0-1 0-4, Totals 42-93 16-21-10.			

Sunday			
22	24	24	11-11
22	24	24	28-10

Three-point Goals			
Atlanta 12-24, Denver 2-5, Daniels 2-6, Ullis 1-2, Rozier 2-4, Tatum 2-4, Horford 2-6, Brown 1-5, Denver 10-33 (Lyles 4-7, Jokic 2-8, Barton 1-1, Murray 1-1, Harris 1-1, Craig 0-1, Mullins 0-1). Fouled Out — None.			
Phoenix 12-24, Boston 4-10, Rozier 9-17, Fariel 4-7 (Jokic 11). Assists — Boston 28 (Irving, Horford 10, Barton 4, Mullins 3, Murray 3). Totals — Phoenix 119, Denver 14.			

Technical Fouls			
Phoenix — Ma-Morris, Boston team, Plumlee 1.			

Grizzlies 120, Suns 109			
Phoenix — Warren 18-24, Bader 6-12 0-0 0-0, Monroe 6-8 2-5, Canaan 1-5 2-4, Daniel 2-8 3-3 0-3, Jackson 6-16 1-2 0-4, Dudley 4-8 1-2 0-4, Udrih 4-6 1-2 0-4, Ullis 3-6 0-10, Reed 0-0 0-0. Totals 38-82 16-25-11.			

Memphis — Brooks 5-8 1-2, Martin 4-12 2-5, Dudley 2-5, Daniels 2-6, Ullis 1-2, Selden 7-12 0-17, Henry 1-3 0-0, Rabb 1-6 0-10, Davis 5-6 2-12, Chambliss 4-10 2-10, Warrants 11-21 2-7, Totals 47-83 15-18-12. <td></td> <td></td> <td></td>			
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Three-point Goals			
Phoenix — Warren 12-24, Bader 2-5, Daniels 2-6, Ullis 1-2, Rozier 2-4, Tatum 2-4, Horford 2-6, Brown 1-5, Denver 10-33 (Lyles 4-7, Jokic 2-8, Barton 1-1, Murray 1-1, Harris 1-1, Craig 0-1, Mullins 0-1). Fouled Out — None.			
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Phoenix — Ma-Morris, Boston team, Plumlee 1.			

Hawks 105, Timberwolves 100			
Minnesota — Wiggins 8-14 0-0 18, Gibson 8-12 1-7, Towns 6-8 2-2 15, Frazier 1-12 0-1, Butler 9-9 2-24, Georges-Hunt 0-2 0-0, Bilec 1-2 0-3, Towns 1-2 0-0. Totals 38-82 16-25-11.			

Memphis 38 (Gasol 10). Assists—Phoenix 20 (Ulis 7), Memphis 29 (Harrison, Selden 6). Total Fouls—Phoenix 20, Memphis 27. Technicals—Harrison. A—13,202 (18,119).

Hawks 105, Timberwolves 100

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NBA



Tom Lown/AP

The Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo, right, is tied up by the Philadelphia 76ers' Amir Johnson during the second half Monday in Milwaukee.

Roundup

Bucks win fourth straight

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 31 points and 18 rebounds, Matthew Dellavedova scored all 10 of his points in the fourth quarter and the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Philadelphia 76ers 107-85 on Monday night for their fourth straight win since firing coach Jason Kidd.

Antetokounmpo picked up his 22nd double-double of the season to lead the Bucks, who tightened up their defense after allowing the Sixers to score 22 of their first 26 points in the paint.

Antetokounmpo then asserted himself in the lane, and Philadelphia was hard-pressed to contain the athletic 6-foot-11 forward with All-Star center Joel Embiid sitting out the game for rest.

Dario Saric had 19 points to lead the cold-shooting Sixers, who were 2-for-26 from three-point range a night after going 11-for-29 in a loss at Oklahoma City. Ben Simmons added 16 points.

Celtics 111, Nuggets 110: Kyrie Irving scored 10 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, Jaylen Brown hit a go-ahead three-pointer with 34 seconds remaining and the struggling Celtics edged the Nuggets.

Denver had a chance to win in dramatic fashion at the end but Torrey Craig's tip-in of Will Barton's long attempt from three-point range was too late.

Irving finished 11-for-17 from the field to lead the Celtics to just their second win in seven games. Jayson Tatum added 20 points and Marcus Morris had 14 off the bench.

Hawks 105, Timberwolves 100: Kent Bazemore

scored 22 points, including a tiebreaking three-pointer with 2:09 remaining, and the host Hawks rallied after trailing by 11 in the third quarter to beat the Timberwolves.

Bazemore's clutch three gave the Hawks a 99-96 lead they did not relinquish. He added a blocked shot following a steal by Minnesota's Jeff Teague and another basket to stretch the lead back to three.

Pacers 105, Hornets 96: Victor Oladipo scored 25 points, Myles Turner added 22 and the host Pacers pulled away late for a victory over the Hornets.

The Pacers have won two in a row and four of five.

Grizzlies 120, Suns 109: Tyreke Evans scored 27 points, Wayne Selden added 17 points and the Grizzlies sent visiting Phoenix to its fifth straight loss with a victory over the Suns.

Deyonta Davis and Marc Gasol both scored 12 points for Memphis, Gasol also grabbed 10 rebounds. Davis missed only one of his six shots on the night, part of the Grizzlies shooting 57 percent for the game.

Heat 95, Mavericks 88: Hassan Whiteside had 25 points and 14 rebounds as the Heat completed another season series sweep of the host Mavericks.

The Heat never trailed after Goran Dragic had a steal that led to Tyler Johnson's tiebreaking three-pointer to make it 38-35 just under 4½ minutes left in the first half. Their lead went to double-digits again after Whiteside had consecutive baskets midway through the third quarter.

Wizards' Wall out six to eight weeks

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Washington Wizards point guard John Wall will have arthroscopic surgery on his left knee on Wednesday and could miss much of the rest of the regular season.

The Wizards announced Tuesday that Wall would have the operation in Cleveland and that a timeline for his return would be determined afterward.

A person with direct knowledge of the injury said Wall could miss six to eight weeks. That person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team did not release any estimate of the length of Wall's absence. Washington's last regular-season game is on April 11.

"It just proves that he wasn't the John that we know," backup guard Tomas Satoransky said. "His knee was bothering him all season long."

This is the latest knee problem for the No. 1 overall pick in the 2010 NBA draft out of Kentucky. Wall had surgery on both of his knees before last season.

Coach Scott Brooks delivered Tuesday's news to other players at a shootaround.

"The message is we just need guys to step up and take their game up a level. It's going to be tough without our best player," forward Markieff Morris said.

"By the time he comes back, we'll be in the playoff push," Morris said, "or just getting ready for the playoffs."

Wall is second on the Wizards in scoring this season, averaging 19.4 points, and is second in the league with 9.3 assists per game. In July, he agreed to a \$170 million, four-year contract extension that starts with next season.

He was selected last week to participate in his fifth NBA All-Star game but now is expected to miss that event in Los Angeles next month.

The timing of the surgery gives Wizards President Ernie Grunfeld a chance to find a new point guard before the NBA trading deadline, which is Feb. 8.

In the meantime, reserves Satoransky and Tim Frazier figure



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Wizards guard John Wall will have arthroscopic surgery on his left knee on Wednesday and could miss much of the rest of the regular season, the Wizards announced Tuesday.

to get additional playing time.

"We cannot panic about it," Satoransky said about the prospect of losing Wall for a lengthy absence.

"John is the main guy, so it's always tough to cover your main guy when he goes down," said Satoransky, who is averaging five points and 2.6 assists this season. "It's very challenging. Obviously, I like challenges, but it will (mean) a lot of responsibility."

The Washington Post first reported that Wall would be having a procedure on his knee.

He sat out Washington's most recent game, at the Atlanta Hawks on Saturday, because of a recurrence of soreness and swelling in his left knee. Earlier issues with the knee led him to sit out nine games in November and December, and he got platelet-rich plasma injections to try to cut down on the inflammation.

The Wizards entered Tuesday, when they were scheduled to host Russell Westbrook and the Oklahoma City Thunder at night, tied for fifth in the Eastern Conference with a 27-22 record.

Led by its backcourt of Wall and Bradley Beal, a first-time All-Star pick this season, Washington lost in the Eastern Conference semifinals each of the past two years

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COLLEGE BASKETBALL/HIGH SCHOOL: FAR EAST BASKETBALL

Top 25 roundup

Trent leads Duke over Notre Dame

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Freshman Gary Trent Jr. had 22 points and tied a season high with 10 rebounds, and No. 4 Duke beat Notre Dame 88-66 on Monday night.

Grayson Allen scored 18 points, and Wendell Carter Jr. finished with 17 to help the Blue Devils (19-3, 7-3 Atlantic Coast Conference), who shot nearly 55 percent after halftime.

They overcame a rare off night — by his high standards, anyway — from star freshman Marvin Bagley III and bounced back from a two-point loss to No. 4 Virginia. Duke has yet to lose consecutive games this season.

T.J. Gibbs scored 22 points and John Mooney added 14 with a career-high four 3-pointers for the injury-riddled Fighting Irish (13-9, 3-6), who have lost six straight.

No. 7 Kansas 70, Kansas State 56: Svi Mykhailiuk had 22 points to lead four Kansas players in double-figures, and the seventh-ranked Jayhawks beat host Kansas State to retain sole possession of the Big 12 lead.

Devonte Graham added 16 points and Malik Newman had 13 for the Jayhawks (18-4, 7-2), who celebrated the Kansas Day holi-

day with their seventh straight victory over their biggest conference rival.

It was the first time in four meetings that the outcome was decided by more than three points.

Deane Wade had 20 points and eight rebounds, and Xavier Sneed scored 10 for the Wildcats (16-6, 5-4), who had their four-game winning streak snapped. Leading scorer Barry Brown was held to nine points — about half his season average — on 4-of-16 shooting and 0-for-4 from the three-point arc.

No. 24 Michigan 58, Northwestern 47: Charles Matthews scored 14 points, and No. 24 Michigan outlasted visiting Northwestern.

The Wolverines (18-6, 7-4 Big Ten) labored through an ugly first half but still led 21-19 after 20 minutes. They ended up shooting just 42 percent from the field and 7-for-25 from three-point range, but Northwestern (13-10, 4-6) couldn't take advantage.

Scottie Lindsey scored 15 points for the Wildcats, but no other Northwestern player had more than nine.



ANNA FUERTS/Special to Stars and Stripes

Kadena's Isabel Tayag looks for an outlet as she is defended by American School of Bangkok's Keisharna Lucas during Tuesday's final in the Far East Division I tournament. The Eagles repeated their title of a year ago, beating the Panthers 44-35.

Kadena can't slow Lucases, loses final gain to Bangkok

Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — Even trying to slow the pace to take American School of Bangkok out of its high-speed full-court game couldn't put Kadena back on top of the Far East Girls Division I Tournament heap.

Sisters Shanique and Keisharna Lucas picked up Tuesday right where they left off almost a year ago, the former controlling the backcourt and the latter dominating the paint, combining for 33 points as the Eagles handed the Panthers their fourth finals loss in five years, 44-35.

"I think our girls competed, they played hard," first-year Kadena coach Jonny Cooper said, adding that the Panthers had trouble converting at the foul line and underneath for easy baskets, which could have led to a different result.

"We missed a lot of free throws and missed some uncontested layups," Cooper said. "We don't do that, it's a different ballgame."

Shanique Lucas, the reigning D-I Most Valuable Player, had 10 of her 14 points in the fourth quarter to help hold off a Kadena team that trailed by as many as 14 points in the first half, but rallied to within five in the final period.

What damage Shanique did in the last period, Keisharna did in the opening one, scoring nine of her 19 points in the first eight minutes.

Their performance offset that of Kadena senior guard Rhamsey Wyche, the 2016 D-I MVP, who led the Panthers with 16 points. Atrisia Simms was next with 12 for Kadena.

The Panthers did what they could to slow the tempo, which was not to the Eagles' liking. ASB coach David Lucas said.

"We didn't play our game," said Lucas, Shanique's and Keisharna's father. "He (Cooper) had a game plan for us. They took us out

of our game. I told the girls that was coming, but we have such a young team, they had trouble grasping it."

Still, the Eagles for the second straight year came away champions of both the D-I tournament and the Hong Kong International School Holiday Tournament, held over the Thanksgiving weekend.

And there are two days left of Far East, the combined tournament featuring D-I and D-II teams playing each other for the first time since 1989.

"It's been good, it's been successful," the elder Lucas said of the Eagles' season. "And we still have two days to go here. We'll see how it all falls."

Scoreboard

Far East basketball

Boys Division I	
Tuesday's games	
Consolation	
Kubasaki 41	72, American School of Bangkok 41
Kadena 52	St. Mary's 37
Seoul American 45	Zion Christian 41
Fifth place	
St. Mary's 43	Bangkok 34
Kadena 54	Kubasaki 49
Championship	
Kinnick 76	American School in Japan 50
Boys Division II	
Tuesday's games	
Semifinals	
Yokota 72	King 67 OT
Humphreys 73	Zama 45
Fifth	
Christian Academy Japan 57	Edgren 29
Seventh	
Daegu 68	Perry 53
Consolation	
Zama 62	Osan 57
Kadena vs. Okinawa Christian	9:30 a.m.
Fifth	
Osan 86	OCSI 78, 4 OT
Third	
King 60	Zama 35
Championship	
Humphreys 74	Yokota 56
Boys combined	
Wednesday's games	
Zion Christian vs. Christian Academy Japan	8 a.m.
Seoul American vs. Edgren	8 a.m.
Kadena vs. Okinawa Christian	9:30 a.m.
Yokota vs. Daegu	9:30 a.m.
American School in Japan vs. Perry	11 a.m.
Kubasaki vs. Osan	12:30 p.m.
Humphreys vs. Seoul American-Edgren	12:30 p.m.
Kinnick vs. Zion Christian-CAJ	winner, 2 p.m.
Zama vs. St. Mary's	2 p.m.
Kadena-Okinawa	winner vs. Yokota-Daegu
Kadena-Okinawa	loser vs. Yokota-Daegu
ASU-Perry	winner vs. Bangkok-King
winner	5 p.m.
ASU-Perry	loser vs. Bangkok-King
loser	5 p.m.
Kubasaki-Osan	winner vs. Hum-

phreys/Seoul American-Edgren	winner, 6:30 p.m.
Kubasaki-Osan	loser vs. Humphreys/Seoul American-Edgren
loser	6:30 p.m.
Kinnick/Zion Christian-CAJ	winner vs. Zama-St. Mary's
winner	8 p.m.
Girls Division I	
Tuesday's games	
Fifth	
ASU 39	Kubasaki 28
Third	
Kinnick 42	Seoul American 39 OT
Championship	
Bangkok 44	Kadena 35
Girls Division II	
Tuesday's games	
Semifinals	
Yokota 39	CAJ 14
Edgren 37	Osan 14
Consolation	
Zama 31	Perry 12; Perry places 11th
King 35	Humphreys 13
Sacred Heart 25	Daegu 34
Ninth	
Zion Christian 34	Zama 32
Seventh	
Daegu 29	Humphreys 26
Fifth	
King 34	Sacred Heart 12
Third	
CAJ 33	Osan 30
Championship	
Bangkok 39	Edgren 23
Girls combined	
Wednesday's games	
Bangkok vs. Zion Christian	8 a.m.
Osan vs. ASU	8 a.m.
Kinnick vs. Daegu	10 a.m.
Kubasaki vs. Edgren	10 a.m.
Kadena vs. Humphreys	11 a.m.
CAJ vs. Sacred Heart	11 a.m.
Seoul American vs. King	9 a.m.
Yokota vs. Zama	9 a.m.
Bangkok-Zion	winner vs. Osan-ASU
winner	noon
Kinnick-Daegu	winner vs. Kubasaki-Edgren
winner	1 p.m.
Kadena-Humphreys	winner vs. CAJ-Sacred Heart
winner	1 p.m.
Seoul American-King	winner vs. Yokota-Zama
winner	noon
Consolation	
Perry vs. Yokota-Zama	loser, 2 p.m.
Bangkok-Zion	loser vs. Kinnick-Daegu
loser	2 p.m.
Osan-ASU	loser vs. Kubasaki-Edgren
loser	2 p.m.
Kadena-Humphreys	loser vs. Seoul American-King
loser	2 p.m.
CAJ-Sacred Heart	loser vs. loser of Perry-Yokota/Zama
loser	4 p.m.



GERRY BRONOME/AP

Duke's Wendell Carter Jr. reacts following a dunk against Notre Dame on Monday in Durham, N.C. Duke won 88-66.

HIGH SCHOOL: FAR EAST BASKETBALL

Panthers win fourth title in row

Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — When over Yokota the girls basketball team captured a tournament title of some kind the past four years, you could bet a player named Bailey was chiefly responsible.

That was very much the case on Tuesday, when seniors Britney Bailey and Jamia Bailey led a second-half onslaught that paced the Panthers to a 39-23 win over Edgren for their fourth straight Far East Division II title.

"Teamwork makes the dream work," said Panthers coach Byron Wrenn after Jamia Bailey added D-II title No. 8 to her pile of Far East hardware and Britney Bailey made it four titles in four attempts, two each in volleyball and basketball.

Britney Bailey led the Panthers with 19 points and 11 rebounds. Jordyn Logue added nine points and six steals for a Yokota team that saw Jamia Bailey saddled with foul trouble in the second half.

But it was Jamia's ball control in the fourth quarter that helped Yokota hold onto the lead "when we needed it most," Wrenn said.

Having those two leaders close out their senior season with another D-II title was awesome to see," said Panthers coach Byron Wrenn, who also helmed a Yokota volleyball team that won its third straight D-II title in October.

"They led their team with poise and resilience. Their teammates answered the call and responded," Wrenn said.

Yokota became the only team in the 28-year history of the Far East D-II tournament to win the title four straight years. Seoul International won the first three from 1990-92; other than Yokota, no D-II team has won that many consecutively.

The outcome continued a lengthy string of Far East finals heartbreak for the Eagles, especially for Sarah Richardson, who has coached volleyball and basketball at Edgren for nearly three decades.

Richardson has steered seven teams to Far East finals, and seven times, she's been denied a title. The Eagles have lost to Yokota the past four times they have met in the tournament finals.

Initially it looked as if breaking that streak might be possible. The teams traded the lead four times in the first two quarters, with Edgren leading 14-13 at half.

But the Panthers unleashed a man-to-man press in the third quarter that completely turned the tide. Edgren was outscored 12-3 in the third period and 14-6 in the fourth.

Edgren and Yokota each have a chance at more Far East hardware with the two-day combined tournament that begins Wednesday morning and lasts two days. Divisions I and II schools have the same teams competing in the same Far East since 1989 at Yokota.



CHLOE STEVENS/Special to Stripes

Humphreys' Quintin Metcalf goes up for a dunk against Yokota during Tuesday's championship game in the Far East Division II Tournament. The Blackhawks won 74-46 for their first basketball title.

Humphreys caps unbeaten season

By DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — After coming up short the past two years in the Far East Boys Division II Basketball Tournament's Final Four, Humphreys finally solved the championship misery.

Quintin Metcalf, last year's Division I tournament MVP for champion Seoul American, transferred in over the summer. He scored a Pacific season-high 41 points and boosted the Blackhawks to a 74-46 triumph over Yokota for the school's first D-II title.

Coach Ron Merriwether pointed to players such as guard Brice Bulutovich and forward Jalen Hill, saying, "They built the house" that is Blackhawks basketball. "But to have 'Q' come in, you can see what a difference he made for us."

Humphreys entered the tournament unbeaten in the regular season, as it had the past two years. But the Blackhawks lost to the same Panthers 67-51 in the 2016 D-II final at Yokota, then finished third a season ago.

"When you go unbeaten in the regular season ... you're not always battle-tested when you go against these great Japan teams," Merriwether said.

"This could have been the year

from the start, but anything can happen. You dream that early, anybody can beat you. But this year, we did it."

And the Blackhawks did it with emphasis early, getting back-to-back dunks from Metcalf and Hill, forcing a Yokota timeout just 2 minutes, 15 seconds into the game. Yokota didn't get on the scoreboard until 4:29 remained in the first quarter, and the Blackhawks were never threatened.

Metcalf, a 6-foot-8 junior, also had 24 rebounds and five blocked shots. Hill had 20 points, 14 rebounds and five steals, while Bulutovich had 11 points and 10 assists.

"It wasn't about who scored the most," Metcalf said. "It was all about the team. We had fun, sharing the ball. You could say it was poetic, everything was running so smoothly."

Kishaun Kimble-Brooks had 23 points in the losing cause for the Panthers. Renyck Robertson added 12.

"They're very tall and athletic, so they're tough to score on," Yokota coach Dan Galvin said of the Blackhawks.

Humphreys gets the Division II top seed entering the two-day combined tournament for both D-I and D-II schools, which begins Wednesday.

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Defense leads Red Devils to first title

By DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — One knock on Kinnick's boys basketball team this season was the Red Devils couldn't play defense.

That was one reason they lost to American School in Japan twice by an average margin of 12 points.

On Tuesday, Davion Roberts and Kedrick Stockman Jr. answered the nay-sayers, combining for 43 points and nine three-pointers and holding the previously unbeaten Mustangs to just 50 points in a 75-50 Far East Division I finals triumph.

"We flipped the script," said Roberts, who led the Red Devils with 24 points. "Everything went as planned, rebounding, scoring, defense, holding a great team like ASIJ to just 50 points."

"We always talk about holding teams under 50 points," coach Robert Stovall said. "But if you look at the scoreboard, it's kind of indicative. We played defense tonight."

ASIJ had previously beaten the Red Devils 80-70 on Jan. 16 at Mustang Valley, and again 57-43 on Jan. 20 in a consolation game in ASIJ's own Kanto Classic.

With Monday's win, Kinnick captured its first Far East D-I



DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

American School in Japan's Koki Wiley grins as he tries to shoot between Kinnick's Kedrick Stockman and Aaron Peterson during Tuesday's final in the Far East tournament. The Red Devils routed the Mustangs 75-50 for the first title in Kinnick school history.

boys basketball title in school history. ASIJ last won the title in 2013.

It was also Stovall's first Far East triumph in any sport since arriving at Yokosuka Naval Base

in 1993. It was the Red Devils' first trip back to the D-I final since 2002, and it was the first All-Kanto Plain final since February 2009, when St. Mary's beat Yokota 35-33.

"It's an honor to be on the same trophy," Stovall said of his name going on the Fred Sava Memorial Trophy, named for the late St. Mary's coach, who led the Titans to that 2009 triumph in Sava's last game as Titans coach. He died in January 2010.

After a see-saw early start, the Red Devils pulled away for keeps midway through the first quarter, scoring nine straight points, helped by two three-point goals and three Mustangs turnovers. The Red Devils led by as many as 27 in the final quarter and were never threatened.

Stockman had 19 points, 14 coming in the second quarter with 12 coming on three-point goals. Gage Henderson added 12 for the Red Devils. Tyler Evert led ASIJ with 16 points and Koki Wiley added 14.

There are still two more days to the tournament as all Division I and II schools are pooled together in the first combined Far East tournament since 1989.

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SUPER BOWL



PHOTOS BY DAVID J. PHILLIP, TOP, AND MATT ROUBE, BELOW/AP

Above: New England quarterback Tom Brady, left, hugs coach Bill Belichick after the AFC championship game against the Jacksonville Jaguars in Foxborough, Mass. Opponents tend to freak out against Brady and Belichick just when they're about to conquer the Patriots' dynastic duo. Philadelphia Eagles' coach Doug Pederson, below, swears his team won't fall into that trap if they have the chance.

Pats' foes have history of crumbling

Brady-Belichick duo's clutch reputation rattles opponents

By ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

Opponents tend to freak out against Tom Brady and Bill Belichick just when they're about to conquer the New England Patriots' dynastic duo. The Philadelphia Eagles swear they won't fall into that trap if they have the chance in Super Bowl LII.

The pair have built such a reputation of coming through in the clutch that foes often outthink themselves with conservative, uncommon or unconventional calls against the five-time champs.

Think Seattle in Super Bowl XLIX and Atlanta in Super Bowl LI.

The Patriots have built an extreme confidence through five Super Bowl-winning seasons under Brady and Belichick and are disciplined when other teams get discomfited, like last month when they snuffed out Ben Roethlisberger's fake spike and intercepted him in the end zone, reshaping the AFC playoff picture.

"You're basically talking about experience and knowing that no matter what the score is, it's not insurmountable," said ex-NFL quarterback Joe Theismann.

He pointed to Brady's habit of making a few plays every game that swing momentum and Belichick's knack for coaxing his counterparts into beating themselves — like the Indianapolis Colts did with their fake punt fiasco in 2015.

"The New England Patriots find a way to make a play when no one else seems to be able to do that," Theismann said. "Teams that haven't been in that situation don't really understand the ability of New England teams to be able to overcome darn near anything."

Like the 25-point second-half deficit Brady rallied the Patriots from in last year's Super



Bowl or the 10-point fourth-quarter hole he dug them out of against Jacksonville in the AFC championship last week.

"You've got to play a damn near perfect game against them," lamented Jaguars safety Jarrod Wilson.

Therein lies the trap.

The Jaguars were on the verge of knocking off New England when a flurry of follies in Foxborough aided Brady's two-TD rally that sent the seemingly impervious Patriots back to another Super Bowl.

"You can never have a safe lead with (No. 12 at the helm,.) Jaguars safety Tashaun Gipson said. "... That's Tom Brady, the greatest to ever lace up the cleats at the quarterback position."

And Belichick, arguably the best to ever roam the sideline.

The Eagles swear they're not going to give the Patriots any help Sunday in Minneapolis.

"You know what? If I make this all about them, we're in trouble," coach Doug Pederson said.

"You know what? If I make this all about them, we're in trouble."

Doug Pederson

Eagles head coach, on preparing for the Patriots and their five-time Super Bowl-winning coach-QB combination of Bill Belichick and Tom Brady

son said. "Honestly, We're in trouble. Everything's going to be written about it, has been written about it, talked about it, discussed, debated and it's about us. And I'll keep saying that. It's about what we do and how well we execute and I can't worry about that."

The Eagles (15-3), who statistically can make the case for being the best opponent Brady and Belichick have ever faced in the Super Bowl, don't see themselves getting out of their comfort zone against New England (15-3).

"Doug is going to do what got us to this point," right tackle Lane Johnson said. "Just because you're in a big stage doesn't mean you have to do anything out of the ordinary to make bigger plays. Don't make the moment bigger than what it is."

The Patriots may need no assistance but that hasn't stopped teams from helping them out like Jacksonville did with a delay penalty coming out of a timeout and a rushed punt that essentially gave Brady an extra timeout before halftime.

"I think why the Patriots are so good is because they capitalize off people making those mistakes," Johnson said. "They don't make mistakes, hardly. They're well-coached. You don't necessarily have to be the most talented team. You saw last year they weren't the most talented team. Yet, they're the best team because they function together well and they're coached well."

They have a fistful of rings as a result.

Drive: Foles latest backup getting start

FROM BACK PAGE

failed and that's why I was a backup. I was a backup because we didn't have free agency and I was behind a guy who was playing really well who hadn't gotten hurt."

Foles is the 14th quarterback to start the Super Bowl after not holding that role for the season opener, including Brady (2016) and Ben Roethlisberger (2010), who were suspended to start those seasons.

There were those who seized the job early in the season such as Jake Delhomme did for Carolina when he replaced Rodney Peete at halftime of the 2003 season opener; Brady when he stepped in for an injured Drew Bledsoe in Week 3 in 2001; and Joe Kapp, who replaced Gary Cuozzo for Minnesota in the second game in 1969.

Then there were teams looking for a midseason jolt that turned into a Super Bowl win. Roger Staubach shared time with Craig Morton in 1971 before taking over midway through the year to launch a Hall of Fame career with his first Super Bowl win. Three years later, Terry Bradshaw began the season on the bench behind Joe Gilliam before taking over as starter in Week 7, then winning the first of four Super Bowl titles. Trent Dilfer stepped in for Tony Banks midway through the 2000 season for Baltimore, lost his first start and then won 11 in a row behind a dominant defense.

There were three other cases of injuries leading to changes before the stretch run, with Vince Ferragamo replacing Pat Haden for the Rams in 1979; Jim Plunkett stepping in for Dan Pastorini the following year in Oakland; and Colin Kaepernick doing the same in San Francisco after Alex Smith had a concussion in 2012.

But only Hostetler, Foles and Washington's Doug Williams made it to the Super Bowl with as few as two regular-season starts.

"I never was a backup, so the mentality was a lot different," said Williams, who started 67 games for Tampa Bay before heading to the USFL. "Even coming to Washington as the backup, I had a backup position with a starter's mentality. That's how I always looked at it."

Williams played that way in the postseason. He helped overcome a 14-point deficit in wind chill of minus-20 degrees in Chicago against the mighty Bears defense in the division round before throwing two TDs to beat the Vikings in the NFC title game.

Williams then put together an historic performance in the Super Bowl, leading five TD drives in 18 plays in the second quarter of a 42-10 win over Denver in San Diego. Williams threw for 340 yards and four TD passes on a gimpy knee to win MVP honors.

"The biggest thing was going to Chicago and being able to come back in that weather to beat the Bears," Williams said. "That was bigger than the backup thing. 10 points in 80 degree weather."

SUPER BOWL



PHOTOS BY MATT SLOCUM/AP

The Philadelphia Eagles' Chris Long is interviewed during NFL Super Bowl LII Opening Night on Monday at the Xcel Center in St. Paul, Minn.

Teams tackle silly, serious at media night

BY DAVE CAMPBELL
Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Tom Brady wore a black wool stocking cap and a big smile. Bill Belichick sported a full suit.

The guy in the shark costume, well, he was just trying to not wear out his welcome.

The New England Patriots were the first team on stage Monday at Super Bowl opening night, the kickoff to the week of buildup to the big game. They gathered at Xcel Energy Center, the hockey rink and home of the NHL's Minnesota Wild, for their first on-site media obligation after landing in Minneapolis in the afternoon.

The Philadelphia Eagles, whose charter flight arrived Sunday, had the second half of the NFL's annual assembly of hundreds of reporters, camera operators and just-for-fun "journalists" surrounding players and coaches with a ticketed crowd looking on from the seats.

Brady led his team out of the tunnel in the set made to resemble a giant glacier in honor of the host state's wintry climate. Swarmed by a 12-deep pack of media at his podium in advance of his eighth career Super Bowl, Brady was asked often about his family ties to the area and his desire to keep his children from criticism and scrutiny. He fielded a query about his most attractive teammate, nodding to Danny Amendola, Julian Edelman and Rob Gronkowski.

And, of course, he fielded a few football questions.

As the Patriots filed out, Belichick met his Eagles counterpart, Doug Pederson, for



Patriots QB Tom Brady's questions on Monday night ranged from who he has a "man crush" on to whether a radio personality should be fired over comments about Brady's young daughter.

a handshake and a photo op that produced a jarring juxtaposition of their wardrobe selections. Pederson had on a white polo shirt with jeans and a cap.

Belichick even flashed some smiles during his interview session, including questions from former figure skating star and lifelong Patriots fan Nancy Kerrigan. Working the room as a special correspondent for "Inside Edition," Kerrigan later asked Amendola about his favorite Super Bowl party food.

"Nachos," Amendola quickly responded.

Eagles center Jason Kelce sported an Elmer Fudd-style wool cap with earflaps that the entire team was given as host-community gifts upon landing. He looked ready for an ice fishing expedition.

"If you're in Minnesota, you might as well do as the Minnesotans do," Kelce said.

Every player and coach on the team is required to be present, so they don't get fined, as Marshawn Lynch reminded the football world during his appearance with the Seattle Seahawks three years ago. That includes the injured players not in concussion protocol, so ACL reconstruction patients Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz and left tackle Jason Peters were part of the crowd, too, even though their knees won't let them play in the big game.

"We're all in the building every day. Carson, I think he shows up at 5:30 or 6, something like that," Peters said. "We're just all embracing it and trying to help our position out."

The aforementioned guy in the shark costume, wearing a credential for "TYT Sports," was attempting to dive into Patriots center David Andrews' deepest fears. Andrews readily called himself a "scaredy cat" and acknowledged a fear of clowns.

"Clowns are out," he said. "Birthday parties. Circuses. Clowns are a no go."

In the thick of the throngs of media on the floor was 39-year-old Patriots linebacker James Harrison, the oldest active defensive player in the league who's at his third Super Bowl after reaching two with the Pittsburgh Steelers. He wasn't interested in reflecting on that or much of anything else.

"I'm just blocking this out," Harrison said, after declining the questions from reporters the most annoying part of his Super Bowl week. "Football is always the focus in my head. I'm running through defenses right now. I'm not really listening to what you're saying."

Wait, why such malignant thoughts about media night?

"Because it's unnecessary. It's useless," Harrison said. "You ask me questions that don't matter, that don't have any consequence or nothing about the game."

Patriots guard Shaquille Mason was more of a willing participant in the silly side of the event. Asked what precious metal Harrison reminds him of, Mason replied, "some kind of iron."

Up in the seats was Patriots bushy-bearded defensive coordinator Matt Patricia, in blue jeans, a leather jacket and a pencil stuck behind his ear. Leaning back in a seat as if he were a hockey fan watching a game, Patricia complimented a reporter for his focus in asking a repeat query about his impending hire as Detroit's head coach. Patricia predictably declined to entertain any questions about the Lions.

"I am very concerned right now about making sure our players have the best possible experience," Patricia said.

He meant the Super Bowl itself. Media night, well, for most of the coaches, players and even some of the media itself, that's one to get over and get through.

"Can we go home now, coach?" one player playfully yelled to Belichick as he walked by his podium.

To which Belichick replied, "I don't know. We haven't heard the whistle yet."

SPORTS



Headed to Motor City

Pistons get five-time All-Star Griffin from Clippers » **Page 26**

SUPER BOWL



DAVID MAIALETTI, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/AP

Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Nick Foles talks with his teammates in the huddle during the fourth quarter against the Minnesota Vikings in the NFC championship game. Foles went from holding a clipboard at the beginning of the season to guiding his team through the playoffs after starter Carson Wentz suffered a season-ending knee injury.

BACKUP DRIVE

Past proves teams can be dangerous when rallying behind substitute quarterback

By JOSH DUBOW
Associated Press

Soon after Carson Wentz went down with a season-ending knee injury and Philadelphia's Super Bowl hopes were placed on backup Nick Foles' right arm, Jeff Hostetler's phone lit up.

Out of all the quarterbacks who have gone from holding clipboards to begin the season to Super Bowl starter to end it, Hostetler's path might have been most similar to Foles' journey. It provides some hope to the Eagles heading into Sunday's title game against five-time Super Bowl winner Tom Brady and the New England Patriots.

"When it happened, all of a sudden

my phone starts ringing off the hook," Hostetler said. "When you really start to look at it, this is probably out of all the times it's happened since I played, this may be the most similar when you get to all the nuts and bolts about it."

Hostetler had started just two games in almost seven full seasons for the Giants when Phil Simms injured his foot in Week 14. After starting that season with 10 straight wins, the Giants lost three out of four and were mostly written off as a contender when Simms got hurt.

There was a similar mood in Philadelphia when MVP contender Wentz got hurt in Los Angeles in a win that improved the Eagles to 11-2, but left them with a backup

quarterback running the show.

"Everyone had jumped off the bandwagon," Hostetler recalled. "We were completely shot as a team. That was the outside looking in. Inside where we were at, we just rallied the wagons. It was us versus the world. We just rallied around each other and it showed. I had a team similar to Philly. They've rallied around each other and nobody gives them a chance. When nobody gives you a chance and you're a close-knit team that has been through adversity, look out, you can be dangerous."

Hostetler said he had gained confidence by being thrown in late in a win against Dallas early in the season, and then leading a comeback against the Cardinals after

Simms got injured in Game 6.

But by the time he stepped in for Simms in December, Hostetler had thrown 93 passes since entering the NFL in 1984. Hostetler managed to lead the Giants to two wins to end the regular season, a lopsided playoff opener over Chicago, then upsets over two-time defending champion San Francisco in the NFC title game (15-13 on five field goals) and Buffalo (20-19) in the Super Bowl.

"There were lots of things that were said, lots of negative things," Hostetler said. "That fed me because none of those guys had seen me play. I never had the opportunity. It wasn't like I had gone out there and

SEE DRIVE ON PAGE 30

Kinnick boys win first Far East title; Yokota girls claim 4th straight crown » **Page 29**

Humphreys boys complete perfect season with D-II title » **Page 29**

